

# LIFE BEYOND DEATH

## IN THE BELIEFS OF MANKIND

BY

JAMES THAYER ADDISON

*in English culture.*

117 FEB 1100

LONDON  
GEORGE ALLEN & UNWIN LTD  
MUSEUM STREET



FIRST PUBLISHED IN GREAT BRITAIN 1933

290

A27-L

Acc. no: 7434

*(All rights reserved)*

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY  
HENDERSON AND SPALDING LTD LONDON SE 15



## PREFACE

IN THIS book I have tried to present a brief survey of all the important beliefs about the future life among uncivilized peoples and in the great religions of the world. I have written, not for the scholar, but for the general reader. And I have taken the point of view of the historian who describes rather than of the philosopher who pleads or reasons. I believe, on Christian grounds, in personal immortality; but I am not here concerned to explain or defend my own faith or to deal with arguments — old or new — as to the *truth* of men's ideas. My immediate interest is simply in the beliefs of believers and my purpose is to reveal the panorama of human thought and imagination in its unending effort to meet and answer the question, 'What happens to the soul after death?'

J. T. A.

EPISCOPAL THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL  
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS



## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

A FULL list of the sources, primary and secondary, to which the author is indebted for his material is given at the close of the volume. For permission to quote from copyrighted works the author makes grateful acknowledgment to the Clarendon Press, publishers of 'The Sacred Books of the East' and of 'The Book of Enoch,' by R. H. Charles; to The Macmillan Company, publishers of Souter's translation of Tertullian, and of 'A Critical History of the Doctrine of a Future Life,' by R. H. Charles, and American publishers of 'The Book of Enoch,' by R. H. Charles; to Longmans, Green and Company, publishers of 'The Philosophy of Plotinus,' by W. R. Inge; and to Charles Scribner's Sons, publishers of 'The Ante-Nicene Fathers' and of Breasted's 'Development of Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt.'

~~the~~ ~~Book~~ ~~is~~ ~~for~~ ~~those~~  
~~who~~ ~~want~~ ~~to~~ ~~become~~  
~~read.~~ ~~it.~~

Miss Bards is for share  
who want to gain some  
knowledge about life  
o. h.



# CONTENTS

## PART I. RUDIMENTARY BELIEFS

✓ I. THE NATURE OF THE SOUL	3
II. THE DEPARTED NEAR AT HAND	10
✓ III. OFFERINGS AT THE GRAVE	15
IV. ANCESTOR WORSHIP	23
V. FESTIVALS OF THE DEAD	32
VI. INTERCOURSE WITH THE DEAD	39
VII. RESTLESS AND DANGEROUS GHOSTS	44
VIII. THE UNDERWORLD	55
IX. THE SPIRIT LAND ON EARTH	64
✓ X. SOULS IN THE SKY	69
XI. REINCARNATION IN HUMAN FORM	72
XII. TRANSMIGRATION OF SOULS	76
XIII. INCONSISTENCIES	81
✓ XIV. DISTINCTIONS IN THE AFTER-LIFE	85

## PART II. ADVANCED BELIEFS

FOREWORD	103
XV. ✓ THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL: THE 'MYSTERIES'	107
XVI. RETRIBUTION BY TRANSMIGRATION	117
XVII. THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY	133
✓ XVIII. JUDGMENT AFTER DEATH	168



✓XIX. DISTINCTIONS IN THE AFTER-LIFE: THE STANDARDS OF JUDGMENT	180
✓XX. THE INTERMEDIATE STATE. PURGATORY	200
✓XXI. HELL	215
✓XXII. HEAVEN	248
A LIST OF BOOKS USED IN THE PREPARATION OF THIS WORK AND RECOMMENDED FOR FURTHER STUDY	285
INDEX	301



# LIFE BEYOND DEATH



## CHAPTER I

### THE NATURE OF THE SOUL

THE belief that the soul of man survives his death is so nearly universal that we have no reliable record of a tribe or nation or religion in which it does not prevail. To study the richly varied forms of that creed is to examine first of all what men mean by 'the soul.' What is it that goes on living after death? Apart from the refinements of philosophers and theologians, we find the popular beliefs of all races and of all ages surprisingly alike. Wherever we turn—to Bantu Africa, to the Indians of North America, to the pages of Homer and Dante, or to the folklore of China and Italy and Scotland—everywhere we find the soul regarded as a kind of airy, filmy double of the body.

Why that notion should be so widely and so reasonably held we may understand more clearly if we inquire how it arose. To make this attempt, it is true, will be only speculation; but it will be speculation in which we have to guide us a mass of evidence from ancient and modern times. A little imagination will suggest what a man must have thought when he looked at a dead body. That body, so rigid and cold and unresponsive, is only too clearly different from the body of the live man. Something has



happened to it; and the most natural explanation is that something has gone out of it. What is obviously lacking, what plainly went forth at the moment of death, is the *breath*. And so, from the beginning of history, men have linked in their minds and in their speech the ideas of soul and breath. The natives of West Australia and of Java have the same word for breath and soul, and in most of the languages of our North American Indians, the word for soul is allied to those for air or wind or breath. In Sanskrit *atman* means both soul and breath. A like history lies behind the Hebrew word for soul — *nephesh*. The *nephesh* was the vital breath residing in the blood or in the heart, and contrasted with the body or 'the flesh.' Of similar meaning is the Arabic *nafs*, the breath or principle of life which escapes at death. More familiar to us is the Latin word *anima*. Whenever we say 'animate' or 'inanimate,' we are using the Roman word for soul, but it never lost its first meaning of breath or wind. Quite as clear is the word *spiritus* — a soul, but also a blowing or breath of wind, like the Greek words *pneuma* and *psyche*. Pneumatic tires are those full of air, but psychology is the science of the soul.

What did this windy something look like which gave life to a man and fled his corpse at death? It was unsubstantial, yet somehow it must resemble him. And that suggests his *shadow*. Again and again in human speech the soul and the shadow are connected. Tribes as far apart as the Basuto of South Africa, the Nandi of East Africa, the Tasmanians, and the Quiché Indians all have the same word for shade and soul. When a Greek said *skia* or a Roman said *umbra*, he may have meant ghost, but he was using the word for shadow; and even today we



speaking of the 'shades' in Hades. At first this was no mere trick of speech: a man's soul was really his shadow. That is why it is known all over the world that souls cast no shadow — because they *are* shadows. We learn it from Hindu and European folklore; Plutarch reports it; and Dante tells us that he alone among the thronging shades in purgatory cast a shadow because he alone was yet in the body. Still clearer proof is found in savage practices. The Ottawa Indians thought they could kill a man by making certain figures on his shadow, and in several islands of the East Indies you can make a man sick by treading on his shadow or stabbing it with a knife.

But there have always been other and better ways of finding out what a soul looked like. Men could see them in visions and dreams. Only a few may have visions, but nearly everyone dreams; and in sleep there come to us, with startling clarity, the very images of our friends, the living and the dead. They move and act, they speak and listen, they are sensible to eye and ear. They do not appear as solid flesh and blood, yet there they truly are — their real selves unmistakable and vivid. What could be more natural than for men to assume that these were souls they saw — the souls of the dead now free from the body or the souls of the living roaming abroad for a brief time? They felt the more certain when they beheld their reflections in a mirror or in still water. There was that same convincing image, not solid, it is true, but so plain to the eye that many savages today identify their souls and their reflections. When men had thus seen souls by day, and time and again by night, they knew how they looked. And on that great question, therefore, nearly all peoples, unsophisticated by science or philosophy, have united in general agreement.



They have added to the notion of the soul as breath and as shadow the belief in the soul as an *image*.

For mankind at large, then, the soul is a breath-like image of the man himself—a duplicate, thin and vaporous.<sup>1</sup> Every bit of testimony from the earliest Pyramid texts in Egypt to the latest ghost-story reminds us that spirits look as they used to look in life. That is why the Greeks called them *eidola* and the Romans *simulacra*—images. You therefore know ghosts when you see them, be it in dreams or by daylight. When seen at all, they are recognizable. The Harvey Islanders, for instance, believe that fat men have fat souls and thin men have thin souls. But a less crude idea of correspondence may be found on higher levels. The ghost of Samuel was recognized by Saul because it appeared as ‘an old man covered with a mantle’; and Æneas sees Dido, ‘her wound still fresh,’ wandering in the woods of Hades. The ghost of Hamlet’s father appeared as clear ‘in the very armor he had on when he the ambitious Norway combated.’ ‘Is it not like the king?’ cries Marcellus, and Horatio answers, ‘As thou art to thyself.’

So exactly in appearance does the soul resemble the body that mutilations of the one are commonly thought to be matched in the other. The Indians of Brazil believed that, if warriors in battle were wounded or hacked to pieces, they would reach the other world similarly maimed. So Dante in purgatory beholds a spirit with a scar cutting one of his eyebrows and a wound high up on his breast. For this reason savages often mutilate the enemy’s dead in order to hurt their ghosts. The Australian aborigine will

<sup>1</sup> Usually it is life-size, but in most of Bantu Africa and in parts of Malaya and elsewhere it is only a tiny miniature.



cut off the right thumb of the corpse so that the hostile soul cannot throw a spear, and the Baganda warriors will cut out eyes and ears that the disfigured spirits may not haunt and harm the survivors. With the same belief in mind the Chinese dread decapitation and welcome as alternatives the chance to be strangled or shot, for a headless body means a headless soul forever. The only way of escape is to have a wooden head buried with the corpse.

The soul is held to resemble the body, not only in appearance, but in actions. It can speak, for instance, not with the full tones of life, but in a shadowy voice, in keeping with its vaporous quality. The Algonquins can hear the spirits chirp like crickets. Homer and Ovid speak of their twitter or murmur; and according to Shakspeare (the sheeted dead,' when Cæsar fell, 'did squeak and gibber in the Roman streets?') So close, indeed, is the likeness of the spirit to its living counterpart that it can think and will, hurt and be hurt, feel hunger and thirst, heat and cold, anger and satisfaction. Of all these qualities and attributes our future study will give ample illustrations. Together they make plain that whatever the nature of the soul in popular belief, it is certainly material. Vaporous it may be, and highly attenuated, but that it should see and be seen, feel appetite and emotion, and suffer harm, is proof enough that it is true matter.

This idea of soul, we must remember, applies not only to men, but also to all that lives. We cannot survey the whole range of after-life beliefs without noting that animals, too, have souls, and even plants. They are of just the same sort as those of human kind and there is thought to be just as much reason to assume them. Animals can think and will like men, and the very plants have an or-



ganic life of their own; so that the passage of souls from one kingdom to another is not only possible but likely. And on that probability is founded many a speculation as to the destiny of the dead.

One further point about souls remains to be noted — the belief in multiple souls. In our own day we hear of multiple personalities, minds so strangely diseased that they seem to be split up into several selves. But phenomena of this sort the savage would explain as spirit possession. Something quite different he means by multiple souls. In these he comes to believe because of his views about the life after death. On no subject of human thought, as we shall see, are the ideas of men more inconsistent. The primitive mind is seldom disturbed by these contradictions, yet even at a low level of civilization there are always thinkers who are ready to explain them away. And one way to explain how the soul can go to three or four places at once is to conclude that there must be three or four souls. How many souls a man will have depends, therefore, not on his psychological state, but on how many conflicting beliefs are to be reconciled. It is a bit of savage philosophy, then, that assigns two souls or more to one man.

The Hurons thought that there were two souls. (One remained in the cemetery until the relatives held their periodic Feast of the Dead and then took flight to the after-world. The other stayed close by the corpse in all its stages of decay, unless it was born again in some descendant.) The Fijians, too, thought of two souls, a dark spirit which went to the underworld and a light spirit which haunted its old home. The early Chinese belief was in two souls, a light one which went on high and a dark one which lived in the grave; but later speculation, after the



coming of Buddhism, leaves one soul in the grave, finds another in the memorial tablet, and sends a third to purgatory or heaven. The Dakota Indians had four souls. One died with the body, a second remained near the body, a third went to the spirit world in the south, and a fourth lingered with the dead man's hair, which was kept by his relatives. In southern Nigeria, too, there are four souls enumerated, and among the Ostyaks of Siberia a man has no less than seven. /

An apparent exception to the prevailing view of the image soul is the notion of the soul as resembling a bird. The Bororos of Brazil believed that the human spirit had the shape of a bird and could fly out of the body in dreams, and the Bellacoola Indians of British Columbia imagined that it dwelt in the nape of the neck, curled up like a bird in an egg. But it is doubtful if these fancies interfere with the simultaneous belief in the soul as a double. In higher cultures, at any rate, the two ideas are held at one time, and the bird-soul is less a literal description than a poetic symbol of the elusive and fluttering spirit. The gravestones and funeral vases of Greece and Rome often depict the soul as a bird, and it has been a common Irish folk-belief that butterflies are the souls of the dead waiting to enter purgatory. The *ba* in Egyptian art appears as a human-headed bird hovering over the mummy. The Egyptians, indeed, quite plainly had another idea of the soul. In addition to the *ba* there was the *ka*, which was more than a mere ghostly double. It was almost a kind of superior genius or guarding spirit, the protector and guide of the deceased in the after-life. To the dead in their new world it was said, 'How beautiful it is in the company of thy *ka*!' And the soul departed cries in greeting, 'Hail to thee who wast my *ka* during life! Lo, I come unto thee!' /



## CHAPTER II

### THE DEPARTED NEAR AT HAND

ALL his life a man's soul has been within his body. So constant has been the association of the two that it is hard to think of one without the other. What calls for the least imagination is to suppose that the spirit will linger where the body is or where the body was wont to be. One of the simplest and earliest beliefs, therefore — too deeply rooted ever to have faded — is that the soul dwells near the grave or haunts its old home or tarries in familiar places in the village it has known.

Reaching back to an age before soul and body had been separated by primitive philosophy is the rudimentary notion of the spirit abiding in or near the tomb. Such is the earliest idea of the departed among the Bushmen of the Kalahari Desert, the Nuba of the Sudan, and the Maori of New Zealand. Other tribes not only hold the belief but act on it by making provision for ghosts at the grave. In East Africa and Madagascar they are supplied with little straw huts as shelter from the wind and rain; among the Society Islanders they may lodge in small wooden images set up for them; and in parts of Australia and Oceania there are fires lit near by where chilly souls may warm themselves.

But the association of the after-life with the tomb is not confined to the lower races. It was an early belief of the Egyptians from which they never wholly escaped and which prompted them to rear eternal pyramids as homes



for their royal dead. Among the ancient Chinese, too, the soul dwelt with the body. Indeed, when the body had been lost, the soul would sometimes be called back and lodged in a tablet and buried in the grave. In Norse literature we meet with the tradition that the souls of the dead might be seen in the shape of small flames fluttering about the places where corpses lay buried. In Celtic folklore the dead live in the grave as in a house. Thus in certain British ballads the other world seems hardly to extend beyond the grave-mound. 'Down among the hongerey worms I sleep' are the words of 'Sweet William,' and says the revenant in 'Proud Lady Margaret,' 'The wee worms are my bedfellows, and cauld clay is my sheet.'

Among the early Hebrews, likewise, the tomb was regarded as the abode of the dead and probably as the dwelling-place of the ghost. There in the family sepulchre the departed could enjoy the fellowship of his relatives, so that 'to lie with one's fathers' or to be 'gathered unto one's fathers' were spoken of burial with quite literal intent. To the prophet who heard the threat, 'Forasmuch as thou hast disobeyed the mouth of the Lord, thy carcase shall not come unto the sepulchre of thy fathers,' the meaning was painfully clear — that in death he would be cut off from the society of his kinsmen.

In the highest civilizations of all, however, are some of the plainest traces of the underlying faith that the departed live on in the grave. We find it everywhere in Greece and widespread among the Romans. Long after the passing of the crude idea that the corpse itself maintained a kind of latent life, the Romans kept on their epitaphs a formula so common that it was used with initials only — 'S(it) T(ibi) T(erra) L(evis)' — 'May the earth rest lightly upon



thee.' In fact, the Romans often referred to the tomb as 'the eternal house,' and one inscription tells us, 'This is our certain dwelling, the one which we must inhabit.' In spite of conflict with higher ideas, the notion persisted through centuries of Roman history, for innumerable tombs were placed along the great highways and near the gates of towns so that the dead within might not feel lonely or neglected. The words of one epitaph are these, 'I see and I gaze upon all who go and come to and from the city'; and another says, 'Lollius has been placed by the side of the road in order that all passers-by may say to him, "Good day, Lollius."'

Far off as these beliefs may seem to the modern mind, it does not take research to find them. They are common the world over today. How few among mortals are those of calm and scientific mind who can wander through an ancient graveyard at night without a creepy feeling that somehow the dead are nearer there than elsewhere!

Yet seldom are the souls of the dead regarded as confined to their place of burial. It is a popular conviction that the spirit will be found, from time to time, in his old home. The tribes of southern Nigeria believe that every departed soul returns to his birthplace before setting out for the underworld, and in West Africa the natives expect him to linger about the house for some time after death. In parts of China the spirit is supposed to appear at home on the third day after burial; and to aid his entrance little bamboo ladders are placed against the garden wall and by the side of the hearth. His widow and children will even avoid the use of knives and needles that they may not, by accident, wound his ghost. In Spanish Galicia, too, the dead are believed to seek warmth by the hearth, and for



their sake the door is left unlatched. With the same thought in mind of the hovering spirits at home, the peasants of Brittany and the blacks of the Congo observe the same precautions. Between sunset and sunrise (say the Bretons) or for a year after death (as the Negroes believe), the house must never be swept, lest harm should come to fragile ghosts. The Oraons of Bengal could tell whether the deceased has left his old home by sprinkling ashes on the floor and watching to see the footprints of a man.

But not only in their graves and in their former dwellings may the spirits of the departed be looked for. They are free to wander at will, and wherever they were once known they may again appear. In the branches of trees, for instance, they find a favorite resort. Among the natives of Senegal and Tanganyika, of West Australia and New Guinea, ghosts are thought to dwell in trees. The Busoga of Uganda imagine the departed watching his own funeral from an arboreal perch; and in the rustling of the leaves the Philippine Igorots hear the whispered speech of the dead and bow respectfully as they pass. In an African village the dead may haunt any part of their familiar surroundings; the Chinese have always been prepared to see a spirit at any turn, for their folklore is crowded with ghost-stories that tell how souls departed have interfered with the business or the fate of human-kind; and not Roman plebeians only but philosophers themselves (so Lucian tells us) believed 'that the souls of the dead do wander on earth and show themselves to whom they please.' Even in nineteenth-century Brittany we have vivid testimony to the prevalence of this rudimentary faith. In the fascinating pages of Le Braz we read that the dead are thought to be everywhere present throughout the countryside, and in constant rela-



tion with their old neighbors. The day belongs to the living but the night to the dead, for after sunset, by old abandoned roads reserved for them,<sup>1</sup> the spirits troop forth and 'invade' the fields and roads to attend to their silent tasks.' Having the same forms as of old and the same interests and emotions, they converse with each other in the sound of rustling leaves and murmuring wind.

<sup>1</sup> Just as in New Guinea and the Solomon Islands.



## CHAPTER III

### OFFERINGS AT THE GRAVE

WE HAVE so far been concerned with simple beliefs about the soul and its future life. But like all beliefs of equal scope and depth, they lead to action. If the soul in so many ways resembles the body, and if it haunts the grave and the home and the village, there are certain obvious things to be done about it. To these customs and rites we must now turn.

✕ It is quite true, of course, as modern students of mankind are ready to remind us, that actions frequently come before conscious beliefs. Men often act according to habit or instinct and only gradually discover reasons why they acted. Into that large problem of interpretation we cannot enter here. We can only remember that whatever may have been the historical order, the easiest order, in attempting a description, is to move from ideas to practices. In such a plan we are the more justified because wherever we look today ideas and practices are found together, and which came first is not vital to our purpose. One further warning, however, may properly be given. Customs and rites change much more slowly than ideas. The same rites, therefore, may find different explanations at different stages. In describing the practices of grave offerings and ancestor worship, we are dealing with customs which were originally appropriate to the most rudimentary ideas about the dead and which logically belong on that lower level. Yet the very same performances are carried over



into higher stages and often fitted with new explanations to suit the change.

The custom of making offerings to the dead at the time of burial finds its origin in no religious motive, but in the instinct to give the dead what belongs to him. If the spirit of the departed is near at hand, and if he feels the same wants as in life, it is only natural to provide for those wants. Just how he can use the gifts is a minor question not often posed.

The most striking form of gifts at the grave is the slaughter of the wives and slaves of the deceased. In the case of rulers and other men of note this custom has been world-wide in its range. We find it in Zululand, where the king, they say, 'must not go to the place of the dead alone.' But in times past it has been equally common in nearly every part of Africa — among the Barotsi in the south and the Baganda in the east, on the western Gold Coast, and in the Congo, Gabun, and Nigeria. Only in recent times has it died out in the South Sea Islands, where it can be traced in Fiji and Tonga. The Mexicans, too, put wives and slaves to death, as did the natives of Peru and Colombia. From Herodotus we hear the same story of the Scythians, from Saint Boniface of the Wends of Germany, and from Cæsar of the Celts in Gaul. 'Shortly before this generation,' wrote Cæsar, 'the slaves and dependents that they were considered to have loved were burned along with them in the regular performance of funeral rites.' One of the oldest legends in Japan tells how the Mikado's brother was buried at Tzuki-zaka. 'Thereupon his personal attendants were assembled and were all buried alive upright in the precinct of the tomb. For several days they died not, but wept and wailed day and night. At last they died and rotted.'



Even in China and India, in the midst of a high civilization, the practice was familiar. Seven centuries before Christ at the funeral of a prince of China, one hundred and seventy-seven persons were buried alive, and as late as the fourteenth century of our era there were human sacrifices at the grave of an emperor. We all know of the Hindu custom of 'suttee' in accordance with which the widow offered herself to be burned alive on the funeral pyre of her husband. The practice was ancient but never universal. Yet it had grown so common a century ago that the British Government had to pass a law forbidding it, and even to-day an occasional case is reported in the press.

It is not only the modern humanitarianism of the West that has opposed this ancient cruelty wherever white power has extended. Confucius is said to have condemned it five hundred years before Christ and to have pleaded that substitutes be offered for living men and women. So many an emperor, in later days, made use of straw puppets, and even the modern mandarin has paper slaves laid at his feet. The same kindly make-believe was accepted by the Egyptians, the Japanese, the Peruvians, and others.

Far more nearly universal than the offering of human life has been the habit of leaving with the dead every other sort of possession. To review the examples of this ancient and undying custom, in every age and on every continent, would be simply an exercise in geography, so endless is the evidence. But a few cases widely separated will serve as well.

Archeology has taught us that from the beginning of the Neolithic Age primitive men buried with their dead both food and drink, weapons and ornaments. In the burial caves of Aurignac in the Pyrenees skeletons have been



found with rude stone weapons laid beside them. In ancient Mycenæ, some fifteen hundred years before Christ, there were placed in the graves jewelry and toilet articles, armor and pottery and vessels of metal. Over the whole area of Celtic Europe has been discovered a rich profusion of grave-goods — arms and chariots, utensils and coins. Excavations in Palestine show us that the early Israelites, too, deposited in the tomb all sorts of implements. Babylonian graves contain linen and ornaments, arrowheads, clay vessels, and furniture. In two of special interest were found combs and scent bottles beside the bones of a woman and toys by the remains of a little child. In Solon's time in Greece so much clothing was buried with the dead that he had to impose a legal limit. Among the Romans, likewise, clothes and jewels were interred with the corpse, and often armor, tools, lamps, and other property. As Trimalchio says, in a romance of Petronius, 'It is against common sense to deck the house of the living and not to give the same care to the house which we must inhabit for a longer time.'

The world today abounds with quite as many examples. The Ainus of northern Japan furnish the grave with bows and arrows, knives and cups and tobacco-pipes. And similar provision for the departed is made in Rhodesia, in Dutch New Guinea, and in Patagonia. But perhaps of more interest are certain curious survivals among Christian peoples in our own time. The peasants of Lithuania, for instance, have recently been wont to bury with a man his pipe and tobacco and his flint and steel, and with a woman her needles, thread, and scissors. Modern Serbian peasants will put a jug of water and a loaf of bread within the coffin, and on top of the mound some towels and head-cloths.



Umbrellas and galoshes have been interred in the Saxon district of Voigtland. A common practice of Charleston Negroes is to leave on the grave not only the dead man's cup and bowl, but even the medicines he used in his last illness. And the real flavor of antiquity we can taste in the incident (reported by Baring-Gould) of the eighteenth-century Devon squire who gave orders that his hounds should be slaughtered and buried with him. When the day came the dogs were killed — but buried outside the churchyard.†

Certain peculiar types of grave-gift are found at widely scattered points. Putting a coin in the mouth of the corpse was a custom in ancient Greece and is still known among Greek country-folk today. The same practice prevails among the Oraons of Bengal and the Chinese, and is recorded of the Czechs before they were Christians. Even in Germany, Scotland, and Ireland, until the last century, a single coin was placed in the mouth of the deceased or enclosed in his hand. Another picturesque custom of wide extent is that of slaying the warrior's horse at his funeral. The best horse of the Pawnee chief was killed at his grave. The Gallic men of war were frequently buried in their chariots with the horses harnessed. When the Scandinavian King Harald was slain at Bravalla, 'they drove his war-chariot, with the corpse upon it, into the great burial-mound and there they killed the horse.' And today a survival meets us when, at the funeral of a general, we see his charger led in procession, sometimes slightly wounded in the frog of one hoof so that it may limp. Merely gruesome is the Arab version — the favorite camel of the departed chief left tethered by his grave, to die of starvation.

In the case of human beings slaughtered at the tomb, the



pressure to find substitutes was obvious; but even gifts less precious have seemed at times too valuable. Cheaper equivalents are therefore often sought. Some of the Mycenæan jewelry, for example, was only of gold leaf, and flimsy and useless jewelry is found in some Etruscan tombs. With a like parsimony the Tami Islanders, near New Guinea, bury the deceased in a miserable old canoe with the masts, rudder, and sails often only indicated. More artistic are the little models of reality so abundant in the tombs of Egypt. In one grave alone (now four thousand years old) have been revealed a complete miniature granary with servants busy at their work, a kitchen-yard with animals for cooking and bread for baking, and tiny ships with their sailors to ferry the departed soul. But the past masters of the art of inexpensive substitution are the practical Chinese. Unsentimental and thrifty, with more than enough of the living to provide for, they have long since ingeniously arranged to spend as little as possible on the dead. The handsomest gifts must be lavished upon the departed — but they are of paper only. Borne along in the funeral procession are two miniature mountains of paper, 'the Golden Mountain' and 'the Silver Mountain,' to give the deceased an endless supply of money. These, with much mock paper bullion, are burned. Paper steeds and riders, paper servants, paper houses and furniture and clothes — all are given to the flames for the service of the dead. And today remote antiquity and modern science blend in an incredible spectacle when one sees the funeral attendants bearing shoulder high to the grave a huge paper model of a Ford car.

In all these funerary customs, ancient and modern, it is easy enough to see what men do. We can view the objects



and describe them. But the motive behind the grave-gifts, as we have suggested, is less plain. For this uncertainty several facts are responsible. In the first place, the rites have usually been performed (whether five thousand years ago or yesterday) with no definite motive except conformity to custom — always a sufficient reason for the mass of mankind. It is only the sophisticated who can give plausible explanations for ancient practices. In the second place, when men are thoughtful enough to tell why they act, their motives vary from age to age and from place to place. Sometimes arms or utensils are buried with the dead for the simple reason that they belonged to him and that he might resent their loss. At other times, as in the South Sea Islands, a more likely cause is the belief in 'taboo.' The property of the departed is mysteriously dangerous and must not be used by others. The only safe step is to inter it with him.

The explanation most widely prevalent, however, is rooted in the philosophy of animism — the belief in souls or spirits. That way of thinking has been common to nearly all peoples as far back as we know their thought. How men conceive these souls of human beings and animals and plants we have already seen. In the same fashion they have long since come to regard all objects as possessed by souls — ethereal doubles which survive the destruction of the body. Thus food and drink, weapons and ornaments have souls, and it is these souls which pass to the spirits of the departed and which those spirits can use. What happens to the man when he dies happens to the offerings when they are buried or burnt; and he, a ghost, wherever he may be, is gratified in the possession of their ghostly duplicates. That is the story the savage will usually give in



answer to inquiry, and that is what the Chinese tells us to explain why the dead really do receive and enjoy the masses of paper money. A common practice in the disposal of grave-gifts lends color to this view. When they are not burnt, they are often broken. The Vai of Liberia, the Nuba of the Sudan, the natives of Oceania, and many other tribes will thus destroy the objects that are to serve the deceased. Though this may well prevent the theft of weapons or ornaments, the probable motive is to *kill* the object and thus release its soul. How natural is this line of reasoning appears in the story of an old countrywoman in Lincolnshire, not fifty years ago. She broke her dead husband's mug and jug and put them on his grave, and to her sceptical rector she explained, 'I deads 'em both over his grave, and when their ghoastes get over on yon side he'll holler out, "Yon's mine;—hand 'em over to me."'

who

don't

by all

Things

And



## CHAPTER IV

### ANCESTOR WORSHIP

IF THE souls of the dead are near at hand and still feel the wants they felt in life, it is natural not only to provide for them, but to keep on providing for them. If they need attention at all, it is hard to avoid the belief that they must need continuous attention. To that conviction we may trace the practice known as the 'tendance' of the dead, which passes easily into ancestor worship. To make periodical offerings to the dead with the sole thought of maintaining them in peace and comfort is properly 'tendance'; but when there enters in the desire to court the favor of the spirits or to seek benefits from them in return, the rites have become in part religious, and we may rightly call them ancestor worship. Usually the aim to help the departed and the aim to win their help are mixed in varying proportions.

The clearest case of pure 'tendance' is to be found among the ancient Egyptians. With all their rich development of ideas about the after-life, of which we shall have more to say, they never outgrew the early belief that the dead cannot survive without the assistance of the living. Their immortality must be bought and paid for. Kings and nobles made certain of their future by leaving huge endowments for maintaining at the tomb the offerings of incense, food, drink, and clothing at frequent intervals. Otherwise, it was the duty of their descendants to provide for the departed without limit of time. How literally they



viewed the needs of the dead we learn from many texts buried in the coffins of the Middle Kingdom. 'Give to me bread when I am hungry,' the dead is made to plead. 'Give to me beer when I am thirsty.' But offerings could not be kept up forever. Some substitute for reality must be found. And the Egyptians, with their usual trust in magic, devised the plan of carving stone imitations of food and beer on the table by the tomb. These, by the recitation of a formula, could be changed into actual meat and drink and thus the danger of neglect avoided. To give this pious aid the inscriptions exhort all passers-by. Anyone can help the dead who will say such charms as this, 'A thousand jugs of beer, a thousand loaves of bread, a thousand head of cattle, a thousand ducks, for the soul of N or M.'

In India the motives for the feeding of ancestors have always been mixed. There is plenty of evidence that 'the Fathers,' as the Hindus called them, could send prosperity to the living or mar their fortunes. But the weight of interest seems always to have been on the side of supporting the departed; and from prehistoric times to the present day the tendance of forefathers has been mainly prompted by filial piety. Eight hundred years before Christ the sacred books of the Hindus — the Brahmanas — describe the family offerings of rice-cakes to deceased father, grandfather, and great-grandfather. The eldest son invites them with the words, 'Eat ye each his own share,' and at the end he declares, 'The Fathers have regaled themselves.' The Brahman priests who wrote the law books of four or five centuries later demand that every householder give daily offerings, if only a libation of water. 'The ancestors,' they assure the people, 'always rejoice at a descendant who is zealous in performing sacrifices for the dead.' The Brah-



mans are even able to inform the dutiful son what sort of food will serve his forefathers best. 'Beef satisfies the Fathers for a year, buffalo's meat for a longer time,' while beans last only a month.

Why these ubiquitous Brahmans were so definite about the diet we discover from an entertaining fact which is worth a moment of digression to report. As they came more and more to dominate the religious life of the Hindus after the eighth or ninth centuries before Christ, they found that the ancestral ceremonies were the only rites beyond their priestly reach. From time immemorial the father in each family had been the priest. Unable, then, to profit by taking the place of the sacrificer, the Brahmans coolly decided to take the place of the ancestors. By a gradual process they intruded themselves as impersonators of the departed, and, thanks to their unquestioned authority, persuaded the people to invite them to represent the Fathers at sacrifices and to partake on their behalf of the offered food and drink. Since these sacerdotal parasites were wont to absorb the nourishment provided by filial piety, they were naturally interested in its quality.

Yet no one was allowed to doubt that the unseen Fathers were truly present and owed to the gifts of the living their happiness and sustenance. 'For the ancestral spirits,' says a law of Manu, 'attend the invited Brahmans and sit near them when they are seated. As long as the food remains warm, so long the spirits partake of it.' Or, in the words of a later text, 'Whatever, in the shape of articles of food possessed by thee, is given with supreme faith to the Fathers according to their name and family, that becomes food for them.' To this very day, in fact, the pious Hindu offers to his ancestors the little balls of rice



and flour and entertains the Brahmans who impersonate the Fathers. Even his reason for such tendance has changed but little: he will usually explain that the subtle body of the soul, unless it is fed, will not acquire that grosser body which it needs for the after-life. If neglected, it will become a wretched wandering ghost.

More plainly religious is the true ancestor worship of savage tribes. The South Sea Islands, the East Indies, and Africa supply us with examples far more numerous than can be cited. The dead are viewed by the Battaks of Sumatra as pitifully dependent upon the living for their support in the world beyond and yet able to reward that support by giving good health and riches to those who care for them. Most of the spirits worshipped in the Solomon Islands are ghosts. The Sea Dyaks of Borneo aid the dead with food and other necessities, but expect them in return to reveal medicines of magical value and all sorts of charms to help the living in their ventures. The natives of New Guinea pay great attention to the tendance of their departed fathers and grandfathers, and on these trusted spirits they call for every kind of earthly assistance.

Africa, more markedly still, is a land of ancestor worship. An old priest among the Ekoi of southern Nigeria might have been speaking for hundreds of black tribes when he said: 'I do not know if ghosts can do harm to the living, but I always sacrifice yams and plantains to my father's spirit, so that I may not fall sick, and to ask him to protect my farms. About once a year, too, I sacrifice to my mother, for we know that ghosts are hungry just as we are.' In eastern Africa the Banyankole have shrines for their family ghosts, for it is to these spirits rather than to their gods that the people turn for help with offerings and prayers. Some



of the tribes north of Lake Tanganyika build for their ancestors little grass huts where the head of the family offers gifts of meat and beer. As one of their number is reported to have said, 'If we want to go on a journey or need rain or any other thing, we bring food to the spirit-hut to show our ancestors we really want assistance, and they help us.' Another native (near the great Mount Kilimanjaro), when he slaughtered a ram and splashed its blood about, gave this explanation: 'My grandfather lived up here, and since I now visit his old dwelling-place so often, I must just once bring his spirit something to eat. Otherwise he would be angry with me.' It was the custom of his tribe to offer these same blood sacrifices in order to obtain children. Farther south on the borders of Tanganyika, when the natives give food and drink to the departed, they offer such prayers as these: 'I have brought you meal and beer. You, my ancestor, know that we are going to war against our enemies. We are to march tomorrow. Let no bullet strike me, no arrow, and no spear.' Similarly, in the northeastern Transvaal, the Bankuma will pray, as they offer their gifts: 'O you, our former fathers and mothers, here is the ox you want; eat it, sharing it with our ancestors who died both before you and after you. Give us life, give good things to us and our children.'

A like story might be told of scores of other peoples in Africa and Oceania, of dozens of tribes in India outside the Hindu caste system, and of many in North and South America. More familiar, however, are the examples to be drawn from antiquity. We know little of the practices of the Assyrians and Babylonians, but it is clear that at least they made regular offerings to the dead and believed that the neglected soul would be driven by hunger to come back



and plague the living. The sacred scriptures of the Persians tell us of the 'Fravashis,' the spirits of ancestors, who must be cared for. 'It is necessary,' they say, 'to maintain the souls of fathers, mothers, and relations properly.' When these spirits attend the sacrifices of cakes that piety gives them on certain days, they 'become joyful and utter blessings on that house and the master of the house, and any persons who are in the house.'

Whoever has even a slight acquaintance with the literature of Greece after the time of Homer will not have failed to note how central in Greek family life is the cult of the dead. For the Athenians the tombs were shrines. There, at annual festivals, at the birthdays of the deceased, and on the thirtieth of every month, the people poured out to their ancestors libations of honey mixed with water or wine or oil. On these the dead depended for their welfare, and in return they served as guardians of the house, with special concern for maintaining the purity and prosperity of the family stock and bringing fertility to the soil. Since the worshipping group was the family and only descendants could serve the departed, there was always the deepest desire (as in Rome and China and India) to leave sons who could carry on the cult and assure peace beyond the grave to those who had gone before. So tenacious are these pious rites of dateless age that even the peasants of modern Greece prepare an annual feast, for three years after a death, in which the deceased is thought to take part.

The early Romans regarded the family as including the dead no less than the living. It was a perpetual corporation which the living must maintain, not only by producing descendants, but by offering to ancestral spirits a regular cult. For centuries these ancestors were worshipped *en*



*masse* as the *di manes* (the good gods) who watched over the home and hearth. Later, however, as Greek influence came to prevail, the departed were recognized as individuals, each capable of gratitude or resentment according to the treatment he received. Ovid in his *Fasti* tells us how 'once upon a time the great feast of the dead was not observed and the *manes* failed to receive the customary gifts — the fruit, the salt, the grain steeped in unmixed wine, the violets. The injured spirits avenged themselves on the living, and the city was surrounded with the funeral fires of the victims.'

Most notable of all the examples of true ancestor worship is that to be found in China. There the cult was already ancient a thousand years before Christ and today it is still the most vital factor in the religion of four hundred million Chinese. Since it can there be seen at its best and in its fullest development, let us look for a moment at its outward forms and then at its inner meaning.

In these family rites the head of the household — the senior member of the family — keeps in his home the ancestral tablets. These are thin strips of wood, ten or fifteen inches high and two or three inches wide, set up on pedestals and inscribed with the names and dates and ranks of the ancestors. There is usually one for the deceased father, one for the grandfather, and one for the great-grandfather. Sometimes the wives of the departed have separate tablets; sometimes they share the tablets with their husbands. In these tablets the souls of the dead (at least at the time of sacrifice) are supposed to reside. Incense and candles are burned before them twice a month and on the anniversaries of their births and deaths; and at several other annual festivals come the family



meals in which the dead share. Simply and reverently the rites are performed. In front of the tablets set out upon a table are placed the food and drink; the father calls upon the spirits to partake and to bestow their blessing; and all present prostrate themselves as they would before a living ancestor. Then, at a later hour, after the spirits have enjoyed the soul or essence of the offerings, the members of the family eat and drink what remains. A most touching sign of how real is the tie that binds the living and the dead and makes the family past and present a true unit, appears in the practice of holding these feasts for the purpose of making 'announcements' to the deceased. Whenever there occurs in the family an important event — a birth, a betrothal, a marriage, a death, or even an advancement in official rank — the members gather before the tablets with their offerings, to tell the ancestors what has happened, that in the pleasure or pain of their descendants the departed may share.

Of the motive and meaning of this Chinese cult of ancestors it is hard to speak with accuracy. In fact, we can be certain of only two points: that for the vast majority the rites are more than a memorial (like placing wreaths on the tomb of the Unknown Soldier), and yet they are not of the same kind as the worship of ordinary spirits or gods. Of course, the average Chinese performs the ceremonies without any clearly conscious motive. He sacrifices because he has always done it and because everybody has always done it as far back as memory and tradition can reach. But if he is carefully questioned or acutely observed, it becomes clear that his motives are mixed. Foremost among them is his desire to extend his filial piety beyond the grave — to show to those who are gone the same rever-



ence and devotion that was their due in life. For ancestor worship signifies that family ties are not broken by death: the deceased as well as the living are all links in an endless family chain. Hence there arises that sense of perpetual communion with the spirits, the feeling of their nearness and continued interest. But what a Chinese can do for his ancestors is balanced by what his ancestors can do for him. In the popular mind these spirits are powerful to work good or ill in accordance with the treatment they receive, and therefore one motive for approaching them with offerings is to avoid calamities and to secure worldly prosperity. To seek the favor of spirits, however, in order to win their help, is an act of religion. It justifies a verdict that Chinese ancestor worship, though not religion pure and simple, is a kind of filial tendance with strong religious coloring.



## CHAPTER V

### FESTIVALS OF THE DEAD

AMONG the many peoples who practise in some form the cult of ancestors a familiar custom is the annual Festival of the Dead. In addition to other and lesser rites there is likely to be a special day when all unite to care for the departed. We find these celebrations among tribes and nations as far apart as the ancient Romans and the modern Eskimo, or the Japanese of today and the Persians of yesterday. And few practices afford so many interesting parallels in areas widely separate.

The natives of the Gold Coast of Africa, for example, observe a general remembrance of the dead at the time of the eating of new yams — days that are given not only to mourning and to sacrifice at the graves but also to festive gaiety. The Miztecs of ancient Mexico believed that the souls of the newly departed came back once a year in November to revisit their old friends. On the eve of this day they would deck their houses in festival style to welcome the spirits, set out choice food and drink on the table, and go out with torches in hand to welcome the ghosts and invite them to enter. Then they would kneel around the table and pray the souls to accept their offerings. The natives of Sumba in the East Indies celebrate a New Year's Feast in honor of the dead. Weeping and wailing they proceed to the graves in the middle of the village and then return to their homes, each family calling on its dead to come back. Nuts and rice and meat are carefully set out



for the souls to eat; and a little before dawn, when the ghostly visitors are ready to leave, their living kinsmen turn out to escort them on their way. In like manner the Eskimo of the lower Yukon hold a festival at the end of November when food and drink and clothing are offered to returning spirits in the village clubhouse. Every man or woman who wants to honor a dead relative sets up a lamp in front of the place where once the deceased used to sit, for the lamps will light the shades on their homeward journey. Quietly the ghosts gather in the fire-pit under the floor of the house and, ascending at a given moment, take possession of the bodies of their namesakes, who then receive food and drink on their behalf. With songs and dances the feast comes to an end, and the dead are finally dismissed to their own abode.

Similar in many points are the festival rites of more civilized peoples. Before they became Moslems (and indeed for long after) the Persians kept their ancient Feast of the Dead. Sacred to the ancestral spirits were the last ten days of their year (March tenth to twentieth). In one of their earliest scriptures — the Avesta — we read: 'We worship the good, strong, beneficent Fravashis [souls] of the faithful who come and go through the town... for ten nights, asking thus — "Who will praise us? Who will offer us a sacrifice? Who will receive us with meat and clothes in his hand and with a prayer worthy of bliss?"' Whoever answers favorably will have his house filled with good things during the coming year. And a much later text gives warning that it is the duty of everyone at this season to provide feasts for these guardian spirits, 'and those are better which they prepare in their own houses, because the souls go everyone to his own house.' A thousand years



after Christ the Arabic writer Alberuni relates of the Persians that at this time of year the people offer food and drink to the spirits of the dead, believing 'that they go to the dishes laid out for them, imbibe their strength, and suck their taste.' During these days 'the spirits of pious men dwell among their families, children, and relatives and occupy themselves with their affairs, although invisible to them.'

Less sociable were the rites in ancient Athens called the *Anthesteria*. For three days at the end of February the ghosts, released from the prison of the tomb, fluttered about the city. Though these were properly days of ill omen, when the temples were closed and a sense of nervous apprehension prevailed, yet on the last day the spirits were invited to enter the houses of their living kinsfolk and eat the porridge prepared for them. The rites ended with a formula that rid each house of its visitors — 'Out of the door, ye souls! The Anthesteria is over!' Just so did the head of the Roman household — at the last hour of the days he called the *Lemuria* — cry to the dead, 'Depart, ye ancestral shades'; and the Lithuanians, in their pagan days, when their Feast of the Dead was over, called out, 'Beloved spirits, you have eaten and drunk. Now go out of doors!'

Professor Farnell of Oxford, to whom we owe the best treatment in English of Greek religion, has this to say of the Anthesteria: 'There is no hint of prayer to the dead or of any expectation of divine blessings that they can confer. All that is done might be prompted by the belief in the continued life of the spirits, in their dependence upon the living for food and sustenance, and by the affectionate desire of the surviving kin to minister to their needs and



periodically to invite them to a loving reunion with their old household.' That is a perfect description not only of the Anthesteria, but of the 'Bon Festival' in Japan.

The *Urabon-ye* — the Japanese All 'Souls' Day — is celebrated during four days in the last half of August. On these days the souls of the departed are believed to revisit their old homes, and all the rites are designed to give them a reverent and affectionate welcome. On the first day of the feast, lanterns are hung at the gate of each house and before the little Buddha shrine within, to guide the spirits homeward. Torches, too, are often set in the sand to show the way to those who come by sea, and ever-green sheds are sometimes prepared for the departed to rest in. Inside the house the ancestral tablets are set out and the domestic altar decorated. In the evening the souls are thought to arrive and take up their abode in the tablets. Water to wash in awaits them at the door, and before the shrines are set dishes of food. These offerings are renewed on each of the next three days, and in this feasting the family have their share. For all members of the family gather from far and wide to enjoy it together, in something of the same holiday spirit which reunites our western families on Christmas or Thanksgiving Day. In keeping with that spirit, there still survives in country districts the custom of holding dances at night in the open air. At last, on the fourth night, fires are lit among the tombs and on the hills, and figures of steeds woven of straw are made ready to carry the dead back to their dwelling-places. Of memorable beauty is the custom of launching boats of straw with paper sails, each bearing an offering of food and lit by a lantern. Lafcadio Hearn has written of these: 'And ever upon the night of that final day — whether the



sea be calm or tumultuous — all its surface shimmers with faint lights gliding out to the open — the dim fires of the dead; and there is heard a murmuring of voices, like the murmuring of a city afar off — the indistinguishable speech of souls... And the frail craft are launched on canal, lake, sea, or river — each with a miniature lantern glowing at the prow, and incense burning at the stern. And if the night be fair, they voyage long. Down all the creeks and rivers and canals the phantom fleets go glimmering to the sea; and all the sea sparkles to the horizon with the lights of the dead; and the sea-wind is fragrant with incense.'

Not only are there similar festivals in the Orient — in China, Burma, Tonquin, and Annam — but interesting survivals of the same sort of rites may be found even in the Christian West.

The Spaniards sometimes offer bread and wine at the tombs of those they love on the anniversary of their decease, and the Bulgarians hold a feast in the cemeteries on Palm Sunday, leaving what remains for the spirits to eat during the night. On the Eve of All Souls' Day, when poor souls from purgatory are released for the night, the peasants of the Tyrol place candles on the graves, keep a fire burning on the hearth, and leave milk and cakes on the table all night for the ghosts to eat. Almost exactly the same are rural customs in the Abruzzi and in the Vosges Mountains.

Even more like the Anthesteria are practices of the Letts and the Esthonians. As Frazer tells us, they used to entertain the souls of the dead during the month of October. At this season the people would prepare food of all kinds and set it on the floor of a room which had been well heated



and swept. Late in the evening the master of the house entered, tended the fire, and called on the spirits by name to come and eat. When he thought they had been satisfied he bade them depart and charged them to come again the next year.

The Bretons say that in their houses, on the Eve of All Saints' Day, there are more souls than grains of sand in the sea, and not so long ago they always set out pancakes, cider, and milk on a table by the hearth, in readiness for their unseen guests. All night long the spirits warmed themselves at the fire and supped in peace in their old home. It has, indeed, been an ancient belief all over the Celtic world that the dead return *en masse* to join the living on the day which they knew as Samhain and which we call All Saints'. So both in Scotland and Ireland there long survived the custom of setting chairs and table for the dead and leaving fire and food for their use.

In England the traces, though fainter, are still clear. We see them in the practice of baking 'soul cakes' on All Souls' Day — food no longer offered to the dead, but eaten by the family or given to the poor. All through the nineteenth century — in Shropshire and Cheshire, for instance — the country people kept up the custom of 'souling.' On this day when the dead were remembered small boys would go about from house to house crying such rhymes as these:

A soul cake, a soul cake,  
I prithee, good missus, a soul cake,  
One for Peter, two for Paul,  
And three for Him who made us all,  
A soul cake, a soul cake!

A bit of doggerel like that, on the lips of a village urchin,



is really a far-off echo of the age-long belief that the hovering spirits of the dead are still hungry, and that in pity or in fear the living, now and again, must give them sustenance.



1206  
H. L.

## CHAPTER VI

### INTERCOURSE WITH THE DEAD

THAT the dead are still near at hand and live in constant need of support and care is not a matter of faith alone. The spirits are thought to communicate with those who survive them and tell of their wants. Sometimes they come unbidden and sometimes they are summoned by those who know how.

Most familiar among all peoples are the visits of the deceased in dreams, for all who can remember the dead will often dream about them. And if every dream of this sort is interpreted as a personal visit of the departed soul, the chances for intercourse will be many and the experiences vivid. Since the belief is well-nigh universal, examples are easy to find.

The Chinese, among others, believe that the spirits of the dead appear to men in dreams to tell of their desires; so do the natives of Usambara in East Africa, and the Zulus, who set great store by such communications. Observers tell us the same story of scores of tribes in Africa and Indonesia. In Australia, too, among the aborigines, and in the Leeward Islands, the deceased can talk with their friends in dreams and give help and protection by foretelling the future and warning of coming danger. Equally common, in times past, was the same belief among the Teutons, the Romans, and the Hindus of Vedic times. And in our own day these ghostly visitors are known to peoples as far apart as the Scottish Highlanders and the Moslems of Egypt.



It has been widely recognized, too, that men need not trust to luck for the coming of spirits. By various means they can encourage them to appear. One of the favorite methods (applied to gods as well as souls of the dead) is that of 'incubation' — sleeping on the right spot. In various parts of Greece, for instance, there were thought to be chasms communicating with the underworld through which the shades could rise. At these spots were sanctuaries where inquirers would offer sacrifice and then lie down to sleep. And in their dreams the dead, without fail, would appear. The Christian Tertullian records a like practice among the Celts of his time, who would seek hidden knowledge by sleeping on graves, to be inspired by the spirits of those within. The very same custom is known today on the island of Kiwai in New Guinea, where the natives will dig up the skulls of the dead and sleep beside them and win their reward by learning much useful information.

Better methods, more generally known and approved, are those of 'necromancy' — conjuring up the souls of the dead to ask them questions — and 'possession' by the spirits for the same purpose. For these practices the special skill of a wizard or priest is needed; but there have always been magicians equal to the task and mediums can still be found in plenty.

In records of ancient Babylonia which cite the various orders of priests are listed 'the inquirer of the dead' and 'he who raises the spirits of the dead.' In Gabun today the fetich doctor calls up the spirits by the sound of his little bell, interprets to them the requests of the living, and returns with the revelation of their consent or refusal. A similar type of medicine-man now serves the Maoris of New Zealand and the Pelew Islanders, for when he goes



into a trance the ghosts can speak through him with a low whistling sound. Wang Ch'ung, the clever sceptic of first-century China, had been watching just such a ceremony when he wrote, 'Among men the dead speak through living persons whom they throw into a trance, and the wizards thrumming their black chords, call down souls of the dead, who can then speak through the mouths of the wizards.' In China the medium is usually an old woman who covers her face with a cloth, calls up the soul desired, and mutters in an inarticulate tone. And the relatives will try to learn from her some answer to their eager questions — 'Do you suffer? Do you need money or clothes? How may we help you? When are we going to die?' With a like purpose the peasants of Brittany and of Pomerania will cluster about their aged mediums, no different in their hopes and fears from the ancient Romans or the modern spiritualists of London and New York.

But most famous of all the characters who have talked with the dead are King Saul and Odysseus. The adventure of the former with the witch of Endor is a perfect example of necromancy. The First Book of Samuel tells us how 'when Saul saw the host of the Philistines, he was sore afraid, and his heart trembled greatly. And when Saul inquired of the Lord, the Lord answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets. Then said Saul unto his servants, Seek me a woman that hath a familiar spirit, that I may go to her, and inquire of her. And his servants said to him, Behold, there is a woman that hath a familiar spirit at Endor. And Saul disguised himself, and put on other raiment, and he went, and two men with him, and they came to the woman by night: and he said, I pray thee, divine unto me by the familiar spirit, and bring me



him up, whom I shall name unto thee.... Then said the woman, Whom shall I bring up unto thee? And he said, Bring me up Samuel. And when the woman saw Samuel, she cried with a loud voice: and the woman spake to Saul, saying, Why hast thou deceived me? for thou art Saul. And the king said unto her, Be not afraid: for what sawest thou? And the woman said unto Saul, I saw a god ascending out of the earth. And he said unto her, What form is he of? And she said, An old man cometh up; and he is covered with a mantle. And Saul perceived that it was Samuel, and he stooped with his face to the ground, and bowed himself. And Samuel said to Saul, Why hast thou disquieted me, to bring me up? And Saul answered, I am sore distressed; for the Philistines make war against me, and God is departed from me, and answereth me no more, neither by prophets nor by dreams: therefore I have called thee, that thou mayest make known unto me what I shall do.' And Samuel then gives to the king his solemn warning of defeat to come.

X The story of Odysseus and the spirits is not merely fascinating as poetic fiction, but valuable to the student as evidence of the actual practices of necromancers in later days among the Greeks and Romans. No reader of the *Odyssey* can forget the scene. In the eleventh book we read that Odysseus, on reaching the land of the Cimmerians, by direction of Circe digs a pit on the shore of the stream of Ocean and round its edges pours an offering to all the dead — 'first honey-mixture, next sweet wine, and thirdly water, and over all I strewed white barley-meal; and I made many supplications to the strengthless dead...' Then he takes several sheep and cuts their throats over the pit, 'and forth the dark blood ran.' Drawn by the blood,



the souls of the dead come swarming in crowds, wailing as they gather. He sees the spirit of his man Elpenor and the spirit of his mother Anticleia. Then comes the ghost of Teiresias of Thebes who asks that he may drink of the blood which Odysseus has been saving for him. Stirred to new life by the warm draught, Teiresias foretells to Odysseus his future fortunes. After him the hero lets his mother drink that she may be strengthened to speak to him. Thus, one by one, he meets and questions the friends of former days and noted figures of the epic world. And 'the other spirits of the dead stood sadly there; each asked for what he loved.'

.x. This Bookman  
 be much more useful  
 to a Dayanand follower  
 (Smaji) or to a orthodox Hindu  
 insofar as it is concerned with the  
 Hindu Philosophy or Karma Band  
 Second to the Note what he has written  
 [8th & you are idiots]



Read

## CHAPTER VII

### RESTLESS AND DANGEROUS GHOSTS

THE departed souls that appear in dreams are more likely than not to be those of men or women who have been loved and trusted by their kin; at any rate, they can do no harm. And those that are called forth to speak with the living are usually sought for the help they can give. Ancestors, too, are normally regarded as protective, so long as they are cared for and revered. But there is another class of spirits that has played a large part in the emotional life of mankind — the restless and dangerous ghosts. These are the ones who most plainly can do things to men, and what they do is always damage.

That the dead are not usually to be feared is clear enough from the fact that the harmful spirits are always in some fashion exceptional. They are those who have been left unburied or who have died violent deaths or who have met their end by some means unfamiliar, peculiar, or distressing.

Rooted in the ancient belief that the soul still haunts the body and somehow depends upon it is the conviction — once universal and widely known today — that the unburied dead are restless and therefore dangerous. In ancient Babylon the *etimmu* were a class of evil demons chiefly drawn from the dead who lay unburied. They wandered miserably about the earth, feeding upon offal and ready at any moment to injure the living. The ancient Athenians (like the Iroquois of America) took every care to



recover the bodies of their warriors slain in battle that the ghosts and their kinsmen might not suffer. In the earliest days of Rome the spirits whose bodies had not been buried with due rites would roam about with an evil will, vagabonds without a home. To be left thus without shelter was a constant torment to the deceased, tempting them to vengeance on neglectful relatives.

This natural conviction that if the departed are homeless they will be resentful and vicious is shared by all uncivilized folk today. Like many other Negro tribes, for example, the peoples of Nigeria believe that without proper burial the soul will flit about disconsolate, haunting the bush or the village. In West Africa these spirits are known as *sisas*, dreaded by every native for their malignant power. And we find among the Karens of Burma and the Maoris of New Zealand the same fear of unhappy ghosts that walk if interment has not laid them to rest. In the opinion of the Chinese (so devoted to matters of form) a mean or slovenly burial is almost as bad as none at all. Even after rites that are merely brief and rude the ghost may suffer. So officers who had offended the emperor were condemned to a poor funeral, and criminals have sometimes been denied a grave. On the other hand, there have been many who were ready to bury the unknown dead out of pity. Or perhaps they remembered the tales of spectres who haunted the living till a wizard could discover somewhere the neglected bones of a corpse, and when these were laid in a grave, the danger ceased.

If the failure to bury the body of father or grandfather would court the wrath of his spirit, so too would the neglect of offerings at the proper times. The ancestral spirits must be not only interred but sustained. And thus, as we have



seen, the motives of duty and affection in ancestor worship, among all races, are mixed with the dread of rousing to discontent and anger the dependent souls of the departed.

Quite as easy to understand is the universal fear of the ghost of the murdered, for if ever a spirit had cause to be vengeful it is he. His wrath is naturally directed toward the man who killed him, but the kinsmen of the victim will likewise suffer if they do not slay the guilty in return or bring him to just punishment. The Ba-Ila of Rhodesia believe that the ghost of a murdered man will pursue and possess his murderer, and the Ponka Indians know that the homicide is beset by the ghost, who drives him mad with constant whistling. In New Guinea the soul of the victim must be driven away with shouts and drums or he will return to blind his slayer. Malign pursuers like these were the Erinyes of the Greeks — at one time the spirits of the slain themselves. And those who know the popular ghost stories of England will remember many a case where the murdered cannot rest. One of a hundred tells us how a lady had been done to death in her room and her body buried in a vault below it. But her spirit could find no peace till she had appeared to tell who the murderer was and to point out where her body lay. Always the ghosts of the murdered keep coming back to haunt the scene of the crime and to torment the murderer till he has confessed and blood has been paid for with blood.

The ghost of the suicide is even worse. Unsatisfied by his unnatural act, he is discontented and malignant. He may be a peril to any and all or simply to an enemy against whom he bears a grudge. It is widely believed, we find, that after suicide the spirit will haunt the man who has done him wrong and bring him to an evil end. There is



real inducement, then, to commit suicide out of spite. Among the natives of northern Rhodesia, for example, when a man has a grievance and gets no redress, he will sometimes go before the evil doer and say, 'I shall commit suicide and rise up as an evil spirit to torment you.' The same motive of revenge accounts for an occasional suicide in India, where a Brahman has been known to throw himself down a well that his ghost might pursue his neighbor. And many a Chinese, in the course of centuries, has hanged himself at his enemy's front door. The remedy may be hard on the suicide, but it is supposed to be even harder on the living 'victim.'

A custom in dealing with suicides is either to leave them unburied, as do certain African tribes, or to inter them in irregular fashion. In the early days of Rome a pontifical law denied to suicides the normal rites of burial, and the American Episcopal Prayer-Book (until 1928) gave warning that its 'Order for the Burial of the Dead' was not to be used 'for any who have laid violent hands on themselves.' A modern Danish custom is to bury suicides in the churchyard at dark and to dig the grave from north to south instead of from east to west. More often, in Christian lands, the corpse must be interred outside of consecrated ground. As the shrewd clown in *Hamlet* remarks of Ophelia, 'If this had not been a gentlewoman, she should have been buried out o' Christian burial.' An older practice long surviving in England and on the Continent was to bury the suicide at the cross-roads with a stake through his heart. Even when the stake had mercifully been omitted, the cross-roads seemed the safest place for the corpse. Witness an English diary entry of 1708 which runs, 'We took up old Hoyes that hanged himself and was buried in the high-



way.' And from far away Uganda comes a curious parallel. There too the natives formerly burned their suicides at the cross-roads.

Just why the folk of different lands should choose the cross-roads is hard to decide. Some have said it was done that the passers-by, treading on the grave, might keep the ghost down. Others have guessed that if spirits so buried should walk, they would fail to find the road home. But Crooke, the great expert in folklore, is probably right when he points out that nobody wants a dangerous ghost on his own property. At the cross-roads, however, the danger is most widely distributed — it is the risk of anybody and everybody.

Through all these suicide customs, whether barbarous or mild, runs the trail of an ancient fear — the dread of a restless and dangerous ghost. The spirit of the man who has died by his own hand is unnatural and must be treated unnaturally. By burning or impaling he must be killed twice over, or he must be refused the comfort of a grave, or, at a higher level of thought, he must be punished by the denial of Christian burial as a warning to others or as an aggravation of the penalty that awaits him in another world.

Other types of violent death have the same effect of rendering the spirit a peril to the living. To be suddenly torn from the body is enough to make the soul unquiet and resentful. The Omaha Indians dreaded the ghost of a man killed by lightning and used to slit the soles of his feet to keep his spirit from walking. The Khonds of the Indian hills need a special ceremony to guard them against the soul of a man who has been killed by a tiger. Such a ghost, if left to himself, will sit on the tiger's head and guide it to



some lone wayfarer who can be lured by the sound of a human voice. In Burma those who have been killed by elephants, and in New Guinea the victims of snakes and crocodiles, are certain to wander on earth with vicious intent.

One reason widely known for fearing all souls who have suffered in any tragic accident is that they cannot rest until they have brought another mortal to the same bitter end. An identical ceremony for helping to keep them quiet has been discovered by the Bretons of France and the Gonds of India. In Brittany they raise a cross at the spot where a violent death has taken place and the passer-by will often cast a stone at the foot of it. And with the same thought of protection the Gonds keep adding to a pile of stones outside their village.

The drowned are another class of malignant ghosts bent on dragging others down to their own doom. When the fishermen of Trévou-Treguignec on the Breton coast embark at night, they often see the hands of drowned men clinging to the gunwale or the hair of women floating on the water to entangle the oars. In Annam the spirits of the drowned will send fatal cramps to a swimmer, and to the boatmen of Borneo and Samoa they are a constant terror.

The agony of death in childbirth makes harmful the spirits of many dead women. In the Fiji and Pelew Islands they are held in special dread. In southern Nigeria their mouths are closed with pitch and their bodies cast out into the bush to keep them from troubling the living. Certain tribes in India believe that these women become a special kind of evil spirit with feet that are turned backward. They are so sure to torment all women who come near them that their bodies are sometimes buried with a nail



through the skull to keep the ghosts from walking. The Chinese are less brutal, but their custom was not to bury such a corpse for three years and even then only to cover it with a mound.

It is not only the violence of their deaths which renders these spirits disconsolate and ill-tempered: it is also the fact that their end was untimely. Merely to be cut off at an early age is therefore enough to make some ghosts a menace. The Buriats — a Mongol tribe — believe that the souls of dead children are harmful to children still living and those of young women appear with beaks like birds, bent on damage to other girls. The spirits of maidens in Annam are thought to hide in trees with malicious intent, laughing weirdly; and whoever answers them will go mad. The same attitude toward an untimely death has caused a Hindu belief that the shades of young men dying before fatherhood will wander about in misery. In quite a different setting, in the Greco-Roman world, it was an old Pythagorean doctrine that children who died young could find no rest in the next life, but roamed about the earth for as long as they would normally have lived. All souls who had not completed their natural span of life were feared by the Romans, for their unquiet spirits were ever ready to distress the living. This very feeling about the impropriety of death at the wrong time is behind the Pomeranian belief that suicides will wander as ghosts till the hour comes which God had appointed for their end, and the like superstition in Scotland that the body of a suicide will not decay till the due time for his natural death has arrived.

Many of the modern ghosts that figure in the stories of England and Scotland are not suffering from any violent



or premature death. But though not dangerous they are restless — tormented by some anxiety. They have left their pledges unredeemed or their debts unpaid or their heirs defrauded or their treasure concealed. The same guilty conscience that would worry them in this world worries them in the next, so that they find no peace in the grave. Only when the wrong has somehow been righted will they pass to their rest.

We have so far merely hinted at what the dead can do to the living, for the ways in which their malice can work harm are past counting. With all races — from ancient Assyria and Rome to modern Malaysia — the most familiar belief is that the dangerous ghost will send sickness. The Chinese, the African Bantu, and the hill tribes of India attribute disease to the anger of departed spirits — disease that may end in death. Often it takes the form of possession by the spirit so violent as to lead to delirium and insanity. Any kind of ill luck or accident may have a like origin. And even the violence of a flood or hurricane may be attributed to the vengeance of souls. In all these activities hostile to men the shades of the departed act with the same purpose and power as the ordinary evil spirits of animistic belief. It is therefore often hard to distinguish the two classes: the one merges into the other. And while no modern student can see in the fear of dangerous ghosts the sole origin of religion, it is true beyond doubt that the evil spirits of rudimentary religion are close kin to the restless souls of the human dead and have sometimes been recruited from their ranks.

More horrible than any dangerous ghost is the vampire — a reanimated corpse of peculiar malignancy. Not all



the dead who return in true bodily form are vampires, for it is more than likely that the earliest of all beliefs made no distinction between soul and body and viewed the corpse as maintaining a dim life of its own. Traces of this primitive notion are plain in many English and Scottish ballads where the 'ghosts' are hardly ghosts at all and not always so called. They are far more like living corpses rising from their graves to move and act as human beings. These are 'revenants,' since they come back after death, but hardly spirits, for they are not of an airy or shadowy nature. And usually, too, they are not malevolent.

The true vampire is in a class by itself and should be strictly defined. It is an uncorrupted dead body *which has been reanimated by its spirit*,<sup>1</sup> and issues from its home in the grave to prey upon the living. It sustains its unnatural vitality by sucking the blood of its victims.

Only certain classes of persons are liable to become vampires: those who have not received the full rites of burial; suicides and those who have met with sudden and violent death; men of exceptionally foul and immoral life, including sorcerers; those who die under a curse; and (as a modern addition) the excommunicated. In some fashion or other they are all sufferers, and usually guilty sufferers. They differ from the ordinary dangerous ghost in that the soul is still bound to the body, unreleased by the decay of the corpse. They are therefore of peculiarly hideous aspect. Sometimes the vampires are gaunt and lean, but always after the blood feast they are puffed and swollen, and their eyes shine with a red fire. The Chinese

<sup>1</sup> Often in Christian countries, such as modern Greece, it has been thought to be animated by a demon or by Satan; but this type of vampire has no relation to our topic of the life after death. It is not the dead man in action but the devil using his body.



believe that they have white hair all over their bodies and that their nails are long like claws. At times they are gifted with superhuman strength and speed.

Vampires, though often to be pitied, are seldom harmless. Rising from their graves, usually at night, they prowl about — sometimes only to bring sickness or merely to maul and beat the passer-by. As a rule, however, they are out to kill for the sake of blood. The typical vampire crouches over a sleeping body, sinks its teeth in the neck, and drinks deep of the warm blood, slinking back to the grave to rest till hunger stirs it again. But vampires may figure in any sort of murderous attack. One Irish legend may serve as a morbid example. A young girl who rashly went into a cemetery at night was accosted by a dead man who obliged her to take him from his tomb, put him on her back, and carry him to a house where there was neither holy water nor clean water. There he slaughtered the three young sons of the house and made a hideous porridge of their blood mixed with oats. After gorging himself, he forced her to take a share, but, fearful of eating it, she hid it in her handkerchief. Then she carried the bloated vampire back to the grave just at the moment of cock-crow. Had she laid him down a moment before, she would have had to remain forever interred by his side.

How to get rid of vampires is not properly a part of our study, but perhaps it is only fair, in describing the affliction, to suggest also the remedies. Since a vampire makes trouble because it is not really dead, the cures are all efforts to kill it beyond doubt. Having tracked the suspected corpse to its lair in the grave, you can there identify it by noting that the flesh is still incorrupt and that the blood flows. You can then use various means to dispatch it



forever. The commonest method in several parts of the world is to burn the body to ashes, and such corpses have been burned in Greece as lately as the twentieth century. In other parts of southeastern Europe, where the vampire belief has been most highly developed, the regular practice is to pierce the body with a stake of aspen or white-thorn, driving it through the heart at one blow, and then to cut off the head. When the body is that of a man excommunicated by the Church it is generally imagined to be possessed not by its own soul but by the Devil. In any event the remedy is simple: the priest will exorcise the Devil and at the same time absolve the guilty soul and reverse the fatal ban. Then flesh and blood will dissolve into dust. The Orthodox Church, having sanctioned the theory of diabolical possession, is fortunately in a position to apply the proper cure.

Brutally primitive as is the vampire belief, it is by no means extinct. Like the witchcraft delusion, it crops out here and there in a panic among the peasantry of Europe. As late as the eighteenth century there was a scare in Hungary, with the staking and burning of many suspected corpses; and in Bukowina in 1919 the milder remedy of reburial was applied to scores of bodies. Shorn of its more horrible features, the fear of the malevolent dead has not been unknown in modern America. Even in Rhode Island, as we read in a newspaper of 1874, a citizen dug up the body of his own daughter and burned her heart in the belief that she was wasting away the lives of other members of his family.



## CHAPTER VIII

### THE UNDERWORLD

WE HAVE so far been considering that earliest type of belief about the dead which connects their spirits with the grave or with their old homes, and we have reviewed the various practices which it naturally suggests. But no peoples today are so rudimentary as to have no other ideas about the departed. Indeed, as we shall see, there is everywhere to be found a mass of conflicting notions which have arisen by a slow process that we can no longer trace. Whatever may have been the order in which they appeared, however, the next step, logically speaking, is that by which the dead are set apart in a world of their own. Instead of hovering near their bodies or their former abodes, the shades are regarded as living by themselves in some land of the dead. And the simplest view to take is that they dwell beneath the earth in an underworld.

To place them there is a natural extension of the thought that all the dead are below ground in their tombs. That they should be united in a subterranean country — a sort of fusion of the graves of all the departed — is easy to imagine. Such an underworld is part of the tradition of scores of tribes too numerous to cite in full, from Bantu Africa to the Eskimos and from Patagonia to the islands of Japan. As the spirits themselves are shadowy doubles of men who were once alive, so the land where they dwell is, in general, a ghostly counterpart of the world of the living. The many interesting differences in the views of divers



peoples are largely concerned with the question of whether the life below, compared with that above, is happier or unhappier.

What calls for the least imagination is the belief most common among African tribes — that the underworld is as nearly as possible like the world above. Among the peoples of southern Nigeria the dead are thought to lead the same kind of existence as the living. In their new home the scenery, the houses, the crops, and the animals are like those they have always known. So complete is the resemblance that this shadowy land is divided into countries, towns, and villages corresponding to those on earth; and at death a man departs to the duplicate of his own town. There, with hardly a break, his vocations and amusements proceed as before. In Basutoland, too, and in northern Rhodesia, the dead find the same cattle and wild beasts and the familiar woods and valleys and villages where they can hunt and fish and feast and quarrel and marry as in the old days of earthly life. And so it is in the Congo, and among the Akamba, the Konde, and many another tribe. Similar to these African notions are those in other regions. The Hopi Indians think of the dead as continuing their old occupations and even maintaining the religious customs of the clan. Certain ceremonies, indeed, are supposed to be performed in both worlds at the same time; and the priest at his rites can rap on the floor of the hut to signal to a simultaneous assembly of magicians in the underworld. On the other side of the globe the Karens of Burma think of the shades as occupied exactly as they were in life, and the Kai of New Guinea imagine them busy at familiar work in the fields, or at home with wives and children, or setting forth with weapons to battle.



Other tribes, however — perhaps of more imaginative vigor — take a more hopeful view of their subterranean prospects. Such are the Tumbuka in Africa for whom the spirit world is a good land where no sorrow nor hunger comes. There all the men and women live in the bloom of youth, and ‘sometimes in the quiet of the night a sound will be heard in the wood like the beating of a distant drum, and the people say, “The spirits are dancing in their village.”’ The same expectation of eternal youth prevails in parts of New Guinea, where, in the spirit land, souls never grow past the prime of life and there is no sickness nor fighting nor stealing. The houses and gardens below ground are finer than here, the vegetation more luxuriant, and the harvests more abundant. So it is in New Caledonia, where the fruit of ghostly trees is rich and large, and in the Isle of Pines, where the departed find no darkness nor trouble of any kind. The Todas of India imagine a world beneath where pigs and rats never spoil the crops; the people of Lapland hoped to be richer and wiser in their future home; and the Thompson River Indians on our own continent believed in an underworld where everybody was happy amid flowers and fruit and perfumed breezes.

There are many other peoples, on the contrary, to whom the land of ghosts beneath the earth has appeared in dreary contrast with the warmth and vigor and variety of life in the body. In southern Melanesia the abode of the dead is dark and shadowy and their life empty and unreal. The Chinooks of Oregon believed in a nether world ‘of windless, soundless half-dusk,’ peopled by shadows that shrink from all activity. Germanic poetry in pagan days pictured the underworld as cold and cheerless, a land of



'chill and gloomy waters.' The 'bottom-land' of early Japan was a place of darkness and corruption, and in the Finnish 'Tuonela' all was hateful and dismal, the animals wild and the water black.

But we do not have to look so far from the beaten track for the best examples of the sombre underworld. We find it in well-known forms among the Babylonians, the Hebrews, the Greeks, and the Romans.

Far down in the earth the Babylonians imagined a vast cave, a dark region of dusty decay. There in Aralu, as they called it, the joyless shades are huddled together, half-conscious, inactive, and forlorn. In the myth of *Ishtar's Journey* the ancient writing tells us that it is

The gloomy house, the dwelling of the god Irkalla,  
The house from which those who enter go not forth,  
The road whose way is without return;  
The house whose enterers are deprived of light;  
Dust is their sustenance, their food is clay;  
Light they see not, in darkness they dwell;  
They are clad like birds with a garb of wings;  
Upon the door and its bolts there lies dust.

Between this Aralu and the Hebrew Sheol there is little difference. Each is but an extension of the grave with its dust and worms and decay. Each is like a huge communal tomb in the depth of earth. The inhabitants are feeble spirits, mere shadows of their former selves. In their dim cavern they barely exist without activity or hope or joy. To such gloomy boredom no human being could look forward; and throughout the whole history of Israel, till the last two centuries before Christ, men viewed with dread this prospect not of punishment, it is true, but of endless negative misery. The psalmist bewails his fate in the familiar words, 'My life draweth nigh unto Sheol. I am



reckoned with them that go down into the pit.' And Job in deep depression cries, 'Let me alone that I may take comfort a little before I go whence I shall not return, even to the land of darkness and of the shadow of death; the land dark as midnight; the land of the shadow of death... where the light is as midnight.' In the earlier days of Israel even Jehovah had no power in Sheol. His care was for the living nation alone. 'Sheol cannot praise Thee, death cannot celebrate Thee: they that go down into the pit cannot hope for Thy truth.' Only in later times, under the influence of the great prophets, could the poet write, 'If I make my bed in Sheol, behold Thou art there,' and even then there was no thought that the shades could know God or rejoice in His presence. Indeed, it is strange that the Hebrews, through the very centuries in which they were achieving the noble conception of one sole God of righteousness, should so long have retained beliefs about the after-life which mark no advance over those of an African tribe. How there finally arose the doctrines to which we are indebted for many of our hopes and fears we shall see later.

Nearly as dim and neutral as Sheol is the Hades of the Greeks. In Hesiod's phrase, it is 'the mouldering house of chill Hades.' In that gloomy region the pale-shades float about, mere helpless phantoms, futile and indifferent. No man who knew and loved life could fail to shudder at such a senseless and impotent future. He would say with Achilles, 'Better to be the hireling of a stranger and serve a man of mean estate whose living is but small than be the ruler over all these dead and gone.' Even the modern Greek peasantry (despite the Christian Church) retain the ancient notion of an underworld where all the dead



go, a twilight abode, cold, and 'thick with spiders' webs.'

The early Romans, too, were wont to think of their dead as united in a subterranean region. The departed shade no longer lived a separate life, but melted into the mass of the *di manes* — the 'kindly deities,' the souls of those who had gone before and who now dwelt deep down in Orcus. Unable to imagine more clearly the life of the deceased, the Romans painted no picture of the world below until they had come to share the poetry and mythology of Greece. Then the Latin Hades grows like that of the Greeks until Virgil can tell us of 'these sad sunless realms of turbid gloom' where to roam about is 'like walking in the woods by the light of an uncertain moon,' and Ovid knows how 'the shades wander bloodless, bodiless, boneless'; but, more active than the spirits in Homer, 'some gather in the forum and others follow their trades, imitating their former way of life.'

By far the most picturesque underworld is that of the Egyptians. For them it was the realm of Osiris, the god who had died and been restored to life and to whose protection the dead were committed. We learn of it in detail from 'The Book of Him Who is in the Underworld,' which was written on the walls of sepulchral chambers during the Eighteenth Dynasty (1580–1350 B.C.) and in later times. With the writing go pictures to illustrate the geography of the land below. In that dark region, through which a river ran, the great event was the daily progress of the sun-god Re in his bark. His voyage consumed the twelve hours when it was night on earth, and during each hour his radiance lit up the confines of one of the twelve divisions of the underworld. In each compartment, entered by a gate,



were fields and houses, and along the banks of the stream dwelt all manner of fantastic spirits and demons in human and animal form. Slowly through their midst passed the state barge of Re on which sat the various divinities who were his vassals and the noted dead, fresh from the world above, who were privileged to be in his care. A few of these he leaves behind at each halting place, granting them rich fields to cultivate. In the sixth and seventh compartments dwelt the kings of Upper and Lower Egypt, but even with them there was darkness save for one hour a day.

So many are the peoples who have pictured for themselves an after life beneath the earth that we are not surprised to find the same details at widely different points. About the entrance to the underworld, for instance, there are several common beliefs. Most simple and familiar is the view that the grave is the portal admitting to the lower regions, for it is plainly by that gate that the dead themselves have entered. Through the grave, therefore, the living can communicate with the dead. Such is the popular theory in most of Bantu Africa and quite the same is the folk-tradition behind many English and Scottish ballads. Long after the dead were imagined to dwell in Hades and not merely in the tomb the Greeks poured into a little pipe at the sepulchre their libations to the departed, so inseparable are the merging ideas of a grave home and a wider sphere below where all the dead are met. For the Romans, too, the grave was the antechamber of the vast hollows beneath, yet not the only point of access. In the oldest part of their town on the Palatine was a hole in the ground called the *mundus*, covered with a stone which they raised on three different days in the year to throw in offerings to the dead. And later, in the growing city, there



were other pits whence the *manes* could rise to receive their due.

Deep caverns have naturally been suggested far and wide as likely entrances to the land of the shades. The Zulus know of a cave with a long narrow passage which the living have actually traversed till they reached the ghosts below. In South Africa the Baperi find an entrance through a cavern where men will sometimes venture with warning shouts to the hovering spirits. All over the islands of Oceania there are deep volcanic rents in the ground which clearly seem like open gates to the underworld. If the dead, as happens now and again, are thrown into these chasms, there will be all the more confidence in the belief. The very same idea appealed not only to the Mexicans and the Japanese but to the Greeks, for classical mythology offers us many parallels. Perhaps the best known entrance is on Cape Matapan (the old Tænarum) in southern Laconia. On its western side, close to the sea, is a rock cavern long regarded as a gate to Hades. And to this very day the peasants believe that the Archangel Michael appears at the mouth to lead souls down to their long home.

For other races the portals to the lower world were far distant in the west. If the sun can go down through a hole in the west, why not the shades of the departed? Such is the view in parts of Indonesia and among Indians of Brazil; and that, as we have seen, is what all Egyptians believed for many centuries.

Suggested by this thought that the sun spends half his time in the land beneath and that it is always day there when it is night here is the fascinating idea that the underworld is a kind of looking-glass reversal of the world we



know. It is easy to imagine, of course, with some of the Pueblo tribes or the ancient Mexicans, that the departed awake to their active life while we are asleep. But other races have carried the notion further. The Bellacoola Indians of our Northwest believed that the ghosts below walk head-downwards and that the seasons with them are the contrary of those on earth. In Borneo (though the land of spirits is not underground) the same idea prevails of upside-down behavior. The souls pass things to each other with their left hands, and though the words they utter are familiar, their meaning is reversed, for 'white' signifies 'black' and 'backward' is 'forward.' Even in the surviving Hades of the modern Greek country folk, when the rulers of the shades sit down to eat at table, their linen is black and the plates are turned upside-down.



## CHAPTER IX

### THE SPIRIT LAND ON EARTH

INSTEAD of segregating the dead in an underworld, imagination may consign them to a spirit land on earth. Since the unconscious motive is to account for their absence or to keep them apart from the living, the land is likely to be at some distance, and human fancy is all the freer to conceive its location. So we find an endless variety of conjecture, for though no opinion can be proved right, none can be proved wrong.

Very common is the vague thought that sends the departed to a far off country of which only the general direction is known. It may be toward the east, as with the Ba-Ila of Rhodesia or the Pima Indians who thought that souls went toward the sunrise beyond a great chasm that sundered them from their kinsmen. The Mossi of the French Soudan put their village of ancestors in the south, and according to one of many Hindu beliefs, the home of Yama, the King of the Dead, was eighty-six thousand leagues toward the south. Others, like the Temi of New Guinea and certain tribes in Queensland, look to the north for their spirit world. But the belief more often found is that which sees the departing souls follow the dying sun 'far on into the rich heart of the west.' Where the day dies is a natural home for the dead. Especially among the American Indians this view prevails. The Ojibways, the Choctaws, and the Indians of Chile imagined that the spirits flew westward in the path of the sun to a happy



land; and one of the Mexican afterworlds was sometimes called 'the place where the sun sleeps.' In Australia 'Kibu,' or 'sundown,' is the name given by the islanders of Torres Straits to their future abode. The Egyptians, too, once called their dead 'the people of the west.' And perhaps we hear an echo of beliefs long familiar to the Celts in that phrase so often used of a fallen soldier in the World War — 'he's gone west.'

Less vague are the theories of other peoples who can locate more exactly the region where the ghosts now dwell. It may be found, at times, among mountains hard to reach. The early settlers in Iceland and the Scandinavian Lapps thought that all the deceased passed into certain great hills; and in Celtic folklore the hollow of mountains was a favorite spot for the other-world. The East Indies and Oceania, with their great array of wooded volcanic hills, offer many examples of these lofty abodes of the dead. The Koita of New Guinea have their Mount Idu where the spirits gather; several Borneo tribes have selected a special mountain peak to which all souls must ascend; and in Tube-tube a well-known wooded hill is so surely the region of ghosts that all the natives avoid it.

Wherever the sea is within view and distant islands break the horizon it is natural that one of them should be the destined home of the departed — all the more so if it lies toward the west. The South Sea islands, of course, abound in such traditions. Occasionally the island is purely mythical, as in Samoa and Tonga, but usually it is a real island on the map. In the eastern Solomons the abode of souls is one of the smaller islands off the coast, and in Malanta the ghosts swim across to two little islands near by. The natives of the Gazelle Peninsula are so cer-



tain that the spirits dwell in the islands off Cape Takes that when they sail past they paddle softly, cowering down in their canoes. Even when the isle of ghosts is inhabited by the living members of some other tribe, the latter will often confirm the tradition by reporting that they can see the spirits strolling on the beach or hear them twittering to each other in spectral speech. When the island identified with the dead is not close at hand nor even visible, the choice can sometimes be explained by reference to the history of the tribe. In many places the afterworld across the sea is due to past migration, and the souls who journey thither are but returning to their long lost home. Appropriate to all these island beliefs is the common practice of floating the corpse out to sea in a canoe or throwing it into the water.

A curious parallel to this Oceanic lore may be found in a legend recorded by Procopius in the fourth century. Writing of the Celts of western Gaul, he tells us that the isle of Britain was reported among them to be the country of the Dead. On the coast of France opposite England were several villages whose people were exempt from taxes in recognition of a service which they had performed from time immemorial. They were pledged to give transport to departed souls. At frequent intervals, year in and year out, they were wakened by knocks at the door and a thin voice calling to them from the dark. They got up hastily, drawn by a mysterious power which led them to the beach. There they found ships — not their own but others. Apparently empty, these were really laden to the gunwale with a multitude of shades. The men seated themselves and grasped the oars. Only an hour later — despite the great distance — they had reached the shore of Britain,



where suddenly the boats were lightened as the invisible voyagers debarked. Not a trace of them could be seen; but every boatman could hear that same ghostly voice calling the roll of the departed on the shores of their new home.

The life that spirits are thought to lead when their world is on earth at a distance from the living may be a mere continuance of their old existence, but more often it is a life richer and happier than they have known before. The Mexican garden-land of Tlalocan hidden among the mountains, the lovely western valleys of the Haitians where the souls feed on delicious fruit, the 'happy hunting-grounds' of many other Indians, and those Egyptian 'Fields of Earu' (originally on earth) where men could hunt and drink and feast and play checkers and go boating — all these are examples of fairer regions that await the departed. They suggest those 'Isles of the Blest' or 'Elysian Fields' so familiar in classical and Celtic mythology. In the *Odyssey* we read of the 'Elysian plain' where 'utterly at ease passes the life of men. No snow is here, no winter long, no rain, but the loud-blowing breezes of the west the Ocean stream sends up to bring men coolness.' And remembering his Homeric model, Virgil sings of Elysium:

... the pleasant realms  
Of verdant green, the blessed groves of peace.  
A larger sky here robes with rosy light  
The fields, lit by a sun and stars, their own.  
Some on the grassy plots pursue their games  
Of manly strength, and wrestle on the sand.  
Some in the dance beat time, and chant their hymns.  
Others he sees upon the right and left  
Feasting about the sward, — while pæans glad  
They sing in choral bands, amid a grove  
Of fragrant laurel.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cranch's translation of the *Æneid*.



Of great beauty, too, are the pictures in Celtic poetry and fairy lore of the other-world in some distant island, like 'the island-valley of Avilion' in Tennyson's 'Passing of Arthur':

Where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow,  
Nor ever wind blows loudly; but it lies  
Deep-meadow'd, happy, fair with orchard lawns  
And bowery hollows crown'd with summer sea.

As descriptions, these Elysian fields are like the happier afterworlds of other races, and only as such can we fairly cite them, for with Homer and with the Celts they were not lands of the dead. Only the special favorites of the gods, transported thither while yet alive, could enjoy their blessings. By Greeks and Romans the same scenery is later used for paradise, but with the Celts it merges into fairy-land.



## CHAPTER X

### SOULS IN THE SKY

IF IT takes the least imagination to look for the dead in the grave, somewhat more to conceive an underworld, and yet more to fancy an island home or a distant land in the west, a still higher flight of human thought is that which sends the departed to the sky or the sun or the stars. Because this theory calls for marked imaginative power it is not often found and always appears among races which have alternative abodes for the dead. In other words, the sky land is almost never the region to which *all* the dead go but a special sphere for certain groups. The important question as to who goes where we must reserve for later treatment, but meantime we may note the types of celestial after-world and the peoples among whom they are found.

Without help from the creeds of the higher religions the tribes of Africa seem unequal to conceiving a spirit land on high. Even in Oceania, where mythology is richer and more varied, the idea is not common. To certain classes of souls a home in the sky is assigned by the natives of the Marquesas and by the Maoris of New Zealand. Several pagan tribes in the Malay Peninsula believe in a fair region aloft where there is no trouble or danger, and others of the same group place it in the moon and think of it as a paradise of perpetual idleness with feasting and music. It is in America, however, that examples are most numerous. The Eskimo of Behring Strait have a land of plenty in the sky where food and drink and light are in abundance and



find their faith confirmed by the ghostly Northern Lights — the dance of the dead that occurs only when many have died. With not a few of the Indian tribes the Happy Hunting Grounds were not on earth but in the heavens, reached by the Milky Way. So it was among the Winnebagoes and the Iroquois. In that celestial sphere there was sunshine and plenty of game, to which the Ojibways added dancing and singing, and the Virginia tribes tobacco. The Peruvian nobles, like the braves of the Apalaches and the Caribs, passed away to dwell in the sun. The Araucanians of South America believed that the spirits dwelt in the visible constellations in the sky whence they could look down upon their earthly children, and the Chaco and Pampas tribes saw their ancestors in the stars. In keeping with this stellar notion is the widespread belief that associates meteors or falling stars with the souls of the dead.

In the earliest religious books of India, which began to take shape about three thousand years ago, the sky was the land of all departed souls who were favored by the gods. Yama, the first of mankind, dwelt there as lord of the dead. In his shining abode of light where 'all wishes are attained' dwelt 'the Fathers' surrounded by every joy of earthly life, including plenty of drink and women. In the succeeding age both sun and moon and stars were viewed as the destination of the pious dead, and one Upanishad explains that the moon expands during part of the month because of its growing load of souls.

But nothing can compare in elaborate splendor with the celestial hereafter of the Pyramid Age in Egypt. Some twenty-five hundred years before Christ the belief prevailed that kings who died were taken to dwell with the



sun-god Re in his region of heavenly light. As the divine son of Re, the king is entitled to the protection and companionship of the great god; and the glories of this royal destiny are the theme of most of the texts in the tombs of that age. After a long and dangerous journey the sovereign arrives on high, to be greeted by his divine Lord. 'O Re-Atum! Thy son comes to thee. Lift him up to thee, enfold him in thine embrace. He is thy bodily son forever.' The supreme joy of this association with Re was to accompany him on his daily voyage across the sky. A notable parallel to this Egyptian picture appears in ancient Mexico, where warriors and nobles were supposed to live with the sun-god and follow him in his heavenly course from east to west. In Egypt, however — that land of incredible confusion in after-life beliefs — the details of the scene were shifted from age to age. The royal privilege was extended to include lesser mortals; Osiris (who really belonged in the west or below the earth) became 'Lord of the Sky'; and Re, as we have seen, was given a share in the underworld as the bearer of light to its darkness.

The life of departed spirits in sun and moon and stars as depicted in the Greco-Roman thought of Stoics and Pythagoreans belongs on a level of culture more advanced than that which now concerns us. Like the higher notions of a true 'heaven,' it is bound up with thoughts of the progress of the soul and of the soul's reward, with theories of philosophy and morality beyond the range of Polynesians or Mexicans or Egyptians. Yet all the later heavens of higher religions, so far as their form goes, are only more refined versions of the happy sky land of simple and unsophisticated peoples.



## CHAPTER XI

### REINCARNATION IN HUMAN FORM

IN ALL the beliefs we have so far considered the dead are thought to live as souls without bodies and in that filmy shape to dwell either near at hand or in some remote region below the earth or above. According to a different type of belief, almost as widely known, the departed spirit transmigrates into another body and there lives out another life. When the new form in which the soul lodges is a human form we may call the process 'reincarnation.'

This notion that there is a limited stock of souls and that the same souls reappear in successive generations is held by many savage peoples. As the father is usually living when children are born it is not often that the paternal soul is regarded as present in his offspring. But the reincarnation of grandfathers in their grandchildren is supposed to be a frequent occurrence — an easy view to hold since the resemblance of children to their grandparents is an ordinary phenomenon.

Nearly all the aboriginal tribes of Central Australia believe that the spirits of the departed are reborn as children into this world, so that all living persons are reincarnations of the dead. After death the soul will linger in the neighborhood, haunting such striking features of the landscape as pools or gorges or rocks or trees. There it lurks on the lookout for some woman into whom it may pass and be reborn. These ghosts are sorted out in special places according to their totems and find rebirth only in their own



clans. But certain Queensland aborigines believe that some spirits are incarnate in white people and have often looked among Europeans for resemblances to their deceased kinsmen. It is even recorded of the late Sir George Grey of Australia that he was identified by an old native as her dead son come to life again. In the Indian hills the Khonds of Orissa will often sacrifice a fowl to some deceased spirit and ask him to enter a newborn child, and when the birth is celebrated on the seventh day, a magician will determine which ancestor has reappeared and the child will be given his name. Among other primitive tribes in India and in some of the lower castes a similar belief prevails.

Africa and North America, however, are the fields most rich in examples. In northern Nigeria the souls of the dead are imagined to hover near their homes in the branches of trees, waiting for a chance to enter the wombs of women; and sometimes an expectant ancestor will reveal to a woman in a dream his desire for rebirth. In southern Nigeria, too, the fact of reincarnation is everywhere assumed, so that a witch doctor is usually called in to discover what ancestor is present in the newest infant. The process is not always simple, for it is thought possible for the same ancestor (who has several souls) to be present in more than one child and for the sex to change from birth to birth. In northern Rhodesia the same confusion arises, with the added complication that the returning spirit may not be a direct forebear, since the soul of an uncle on either side may lodge in a nephew or that of an aunt in her niece. In West Africa the Yoruba inquire of their family god which of the ancestors has come back in the latest baby, and at his rebirth he is greeted with the words, 'Thou art



come!' At what point the returning soul enters upon its new life is an uncertain matter. Sometimes it is fancied to be at conception and sometimes at birth, but in the Elgayo tribe of Kenya and in Uganda it occurs when the child is solemnly named for its predecessor now present once more among the living. In one form or another the belief in reincarnation appears on the Gold Coast, where dead children can be reborn as their own brothers and sisters, in Cameroon, and among the tribes of the lower Congo where the mother, as she listens to the stammering speech of her child, will imagine that in the strange words she has never knowingly taught a spirit of long ago is telling his thought.

Exactly parallel beliefs may be found among the North American Indians. When a pregnant woman dreamed of some dead relative, the Tlingits of Alaska concluded that her child would contain his soul, and the baby would receive his name. After someone's death, in a village of the Behring Strait Eskimo, the first infant to be born will be given the name of the deceased and will represent him at the festivals held in his honor. The Hopi of Arizona used to make a road from the grave of a little child toward its old home so that its soul might live again in the next baby born to the family. With a similar thought in mind, the Hurons would bury little children by the roadside that their souls might enter into women who passed by and be born again; and the Algonquin women who wanted to become mothers would sometimes gather about the bed of a dying man in the hope that his spirit would lodge in one of them. More formal means of transfer were used by the Carrier Indians of British Columbia. At the funeral ceremony a medicine-man would stand at the head of a corpse and look upon its breast through both his hands. Then he would hold his



hands over the head of some one of the relatives present and blow into him the departed soul. And in the first child born to the recipient the spirit would be incarnated. But no such direct proof is usually required. It is generally enough to notice the resemblance of a child to an ancestor, and even an accidental likeness to some noted figure of the past is sufficient. Tylor, for instance, reports that in Vancouver's Island in 1860 a boy was revered by the Indians because he had a mark on his hip like the scar of a gunshot wound, and just such a scar had been borne by a great chief four generations before. The mere identity of name is enough at times to confirm belief in a case of reincarnation. Though usually a result of the fact, it may even figure as a proof. Thus we are told that when Father Lafitau arrived at St. Louis two hundred years ago to begin work among the Iroquois, his colleagues decided that if he wished to make a favorable impression on the natives, he would do well to assume the Indian name of his beloved predecessor Father Brüyas. Lafitau took the advice and wrote years afterward, 'They did not fail to regard me as himself in another form.'

پہ کتاب لے گا۔ جو میرا لایا۔ ہر امر اوس کو ہے۔  
 "You wrote this, because,  
 you are such"

The boy who will get hold of this book  
 will be ~~of~~ Harangadadase  
 Don't borrow this book  
 from library of you

After all

Present - College of - as you to learn to be,



## CHAPTER XII

### TRANSMIGRATION OF SOULS

SINCE animals have souls of the same kind as men, it is just as easy for a human spirit to reappear in animal shape as to be reincarnate in his own kin. The belief in the transmigration of souls from one form of existence to another is therefore common in every quarter of the world and adds one more familiar answer to the eternal problem of the after-life.

Examples from Africa are abundant and varied. The peoples of northern Rhodesia are among many who believe that human souls may pass into the bodies of animals of every sort — hippopotami, pigs, hyenas, lions, leopards, elephants, and snakes. According to their view, a man may choose, with the aid of magic, what kind of beast his spirit shall inhabit. If the wizard he employs is successful his fate is assured, and the worms that crawl from his body will turn into the animal he wished to be. But only kings can hope to become lions. The same privilege awaits the chiefs of the Zulus and the Banyankole, while the Barotsi look to the hippopotamus as the incarnation of royalty. A less dignified future awaits the souls of the poor and neglected who in Cameroon are supposed to dwell in chimpanzees. And the Konde affirm that if a man's family dies out after his decease he is doomed to turn into a frog. So confident of transmigration are the Negroes of northern Guinea that certain animals, such as monkeys, snakes, and crocodiles, are held to be sacred because they are always animated by



spirits of the dead. With the same sense of precaution an Ababu tribesman of the Congo will avoid the flesh of whatever animal he expects to become in the next life — be it leopard, gorilla, or gazelle.

An identical custom, based on a like belief, appears in northern New Guinea where the Papuans, knowing that souls may migrate into fish or pigs or cassowaries, will carefully abstain from eating whatever kind of creature the dead are likely to inhabit. To assure his future safety a native of Lifu or a Solomon Islander, when at the point of death, will gather about him the members of his family and tell them just what sort of animal his spirit will animate, so that they may avoid that species of insect, bird, or beast, and never kill or injure it. But the Semang of the Malay Peninsula confine the process of transmigration to chiefs and magicians, whose souls will go to dwell in rhinoceroses and elephants and in that shape will generously protect their living kinsmen. The more common view, however, throughout Oceania and Indonesia, is that the spirits do not pass into animal forms until they have lived long in the other world and have there died a second death. Transmigration is thus a last resort to save the soul from annihilation or perhaps, on the part of the living, 'a mental refuge from asserting pure extinction.' Thus among the Sea Dyaks of Borneo the soul dies several times and eventually becomes an insect or a jungle plant. And with the natives of eastern and central Melanesia the spirits are supposed to die twice and then turn into white ants.

The ancient Mexicans, on the contrary, thought of transmigration not as an ultimate calamity but as an enviable reward. The souls of nobles and fallen warriors, after a sojourn in the region of the sun-god, were reborn as



birds of rich plumage and brilliant colors, while common folk and cowards became weasels and beetles. The same preference for future life as a bird is found among the Powhatans who imagined the spirits of their chiefs to reappear in small wood-birds, and in South America where hawks and eagles were commonly regarded as creatures with souls once human. The prejudice against using certain animals for food is likewise familiar among Indians. The Caingue of Paraguay would often refuse to eat the flesh of a domestic pig, saying 'He was a man'; the Canalos of Ecuador, who expected rebirth as jaguars, would never attack that animal except in self-defence; and a traveller has written of an Eskimo widow who would not eat walrus meat because a magician had told her that her late husband had entered into a walrus.

Even our own ancestors — Celtic and Germanic — were firm believers in occasional transmigration. In Teutonic lore wandering souls may appear in animal form as wolves, bears, ravens, or insects, though when the change is due to human magic, it is not part of the creed of the after-life. In English and Scottish popular ballads, the best of which are pagan at heart, the soul will often pass at death into animals, birds, or plants. In 'Earl Brand,' for example, it is said of the dead lovers:

The one was buried in Mary's kirk,  
The other in Mary's quire;  
The one sprung up a bonnie bush,  
And the other a bonnier brier.

And the fate of 'The Cruel Mother' is foretold in these words:

Ye sall be seven years bird on the tree,  
Ye sall be seven years fish i the sea.



According to Breton and British folklore, the souls of unbaptized children will flutter through the air in the form of birds until the Judgment Day. And in Brittany and on the east and west coasts of England there are still traces of an ancient belief (shared by the Pythagoreans of Greece and Italy) that the souls of dead fishermen and sailors dwell in the bodies of white sea-gulls.

Though the types of animal rebirth are too numerous to be listed, there is a marked preference for certain forms. Curiously enough the snake is the commonest favorite. In at least a dozen African tribes the ancestral spirits are supposed to return to their old homes in the shape of serpents. With the Suk of Kenya the presence of a snake in the house indicates that an ancestor is hungry, and caution suggests that milk and meat should be promptly offered to it. If a snake is haunting the house, the Zulus call it 'father' and give it milk. The Masai believe that when a rich man or a magician dies his soul goes into a snake and returns to his children's *kraal*, and if it is fed with milk it will protect them. In quite another region the Melanesians often hold a serpent sacred, as the embodiment of a family ghost, and the Philippine Igorots are so careful to feed the eels they find in streams that the creatures become tame as carp. Even in China 'it is the general conviction that a snake's coming signifies the visit of some ancestor. It is treated, therefore, with all veneration. Prostrations are frequently made before it, cash-paper and candles are burned, and when the reptile leaves, it is graciously escorted upon its way.' Teuton customs likewise once included the careful tending of the 'house-snake,' the incarnation of some forefather and the helpful guardian genius of the home. In Roman houses, too (so Pliny tells



us) snakes were protected and fed as ancestors in serpent form.

The types of transmigration we have cited are all of a rudimentary sort: they have little or no relation to any idea of future reward or punishment. When the same conception greets us later in the religious thought of India and Greece, it will be on a higher level and charged with a deeper meaning for human life.



## CHAPTER XIV

### DISTINCTIONS IN THE AFTER-LIFE

How are people ranked and graded in the next life and how and why do their lots differ? In other words, what is the basis for distinctions among departed spirits? That question has had to be reserved till we could examine the various fates that await them, but an answer must now be attempted. It will seem to many the most interesting aspect of after-life beliefs, since it is really a review of the history of human morals — a reflection of the social systems and the ethical progress of mankind. Most of the story remains to be told in later chapters, for here we are concerned only with ideas on the lower levels of thought.

With certain exceptions to be noted, it is generally true, in the whole region of rudimentary beliefs, that distinctions after death are not moral distinctions and do not take the form of rewards and punishments.

Just as the simplest type of after-world is a ghostly duplication of the present life, so the simplest notion of distinctions is to extend beyond the grave the same differences that we see here. Throughout most of Bantu Africa the status of a man clings to him in the other world. All men go to the same place and there mingle freely — just as they do here — but the high remain high and the low remain low. The rich are still rich and the poor poor. Chiefly for lack of power to imagine anything else, the earthly situation is merely perpetuated. In those dreary underworlds — the Babylonian Aralu, the Hebrew Sheol,



and the Greek Hades — there is no reproduction of the varied activities of mortal life such as we find in Africa; but there is the same lack of grouping: everyone goes to the same place and remains a feeble copy of what he was.

A curious example of how an older belief can be 'telescoped' into a newer is the familiar connection between the funeral and the fate beyond death. When the soul is regarded as dependent on the body it is natural that the obsequies accorded to the latter should affect the lot of the former; yet even when a special after-world for spirits is imagined the same conviction still persists, supported by new reasons. A man's status in the next life will be determined by the style of his burial, since the burial will indicate how important he is. Among Congo tribes the grander the funeral the better the reception of the dead in his new home. The Nigerian practice of giving a second burial is to assure the dead a higher standing in the ghostly realm. The ceremonies are therefore extensive and extravagant for the wrath of the deceased is sure to be visited upon all who try to economize on funerals. In the Gazelle Peninsula of New Britain the same idea prevails; the ghost depends for his future rank on the lavish display of money at the funeral feast, even though the cash be later divided among his relatives. On St. Augustine's Island in Polynesia the funeral feast is decisive of even more than status, for if it is liberal the soul will go to a bright clear land — otherwise to a land of mud and darkness.

A more emphatic way of perpetuating earthly distinctions is to assign to one region the rich, noble, and powerful and to another the common herd. This kind of separation is likely to evolve when a tribe has come to believe in more than one after-world, since the two beliefs can thus be



reconciled. It is especially common among tribes of Oceania and America.

The natives of the Leeward Islands suppose that chiefs and members of certain societies go to a paradise called 'sweet-scented Rohutu,' while common people go to 'foul-scented Rohutu.' In the Marquesas and Paumotus there is a lower world for commoners and a happy sky land for chiefs and warriors. In Ceram a celestial home is reserved for nobles, and ordinary souls dwell in the mountains after death. In the Fiji after-world — amid certain mountains on the largest island — the chiefs are kept at one end and common folk at the other. A similar distinction prevails in Indian tradition. The Ahts of Vancouver's Island had a sunny land in the heavens for high chiefs and another for those slain in battle, but tribesmen of low degree passed under the earth to find poor houses and poor hunting. According to ancient Peruvian belief the royal Incas, together with many nobles, were raised at death to the mansions of the Sun while the mass of mankind, in their own after-world, lived out a continuation of earthly existence. The same respect for rank and power, among the Virginia tribes and the Guayacuras, sent chiefs and medicine-men in the one case to a western paradise and in the other to the moon. Transmigration, too, as we have seen, affords another method of perpetuating the differences of this life. The Betsileo of Madagascar offer one example of a type in their belief that the souls of nobles will be reborn as boa-constrictors, the souls of commoners in good standing as crocodiles, while the dregs of the tribe will reappear as eels.

Since bravery and prowess in battle are the prime characteristics of the tribal chief or warrior, it is only an



extension of the idea of rank when courage is made the test for distinction in the next world. Such was the thought of the Mandans of South Dakota, who assigned to the brave the delightful villages of the gods, and of the Assiniboins who kept their paradise in the south for the brave and left to the cowardly a distant region of eternal ice and snow. In like manner, the Caribs believed that valiant fighters went to happy islands where there was good fruit and dancing and feasting and where their enemies served them as slaves; but cowards departed to serve their enemies in a barren land beyond the mountains. The Fijians hold that men who have slain no enemy in this world are compelled in the next to beat dirt with the clubs they have used so feebly, and the Dyaks of Borneo reckon that in the after-world a man's rank will accord with the number of heads he has taken in war. And for an instance nearer home we may recall that only a hero fallen in battle could enter the Norse Valhalla 'to sit at feast with Odin and his peers.'

Though it is true that the possession of courage is nearly equivalent to the possession of tribal rank and that a happy future for the brave is not exactly a reward, we have here, none the less, the crude beginning of a moral test to determine a man's fate. The successful head-hunter may not be 'good' from our point of view, but he has the virtue that his fellows most admire and is therefore what *they* mean by 'good.'

But there are other tests of no moral worth by which to decide whether a man is a normal member of the tribe in good standing; and these may likewise serve to determine his position after death. In one of the Solomon Islands, for instance, the land of the dead is easily reached only by



those who have had their noses pierced. In the New Hebrides it is the ears that must be pierced, or the ghost must have been a member of some tribal club or acquainted with certain tribal songs. Since the Gulf tribes of Australia have the custom of knocking out a man's front teeth at their regular initiations, it is only those so marked who will drink clear water in the sky land. Elsewhere it is the tattoo marks of the tribe that serve as a passport to ghostly honors. A further requisite is sometimes the normal status of a married man, for the natives of Futuna in the western Pacific exclude their celibates from the land of the dead till their spirits have suffered a severe beating, and the Fijians believed that bachelors on the road to the spirit world were stopped by a savage god who smashed them to atoms.

Another ground for distinctions in the after-life has reference to the manner of death. Here we find in a new sphere the survival of beliefs that began on an earlier level. The kind of death a man meets is supposed to decide whether he will rest in his grave or prowl about to harm others, but it can also decide his classification in the next world. Those who have died an unnatural death and whose burial rites have been equally abnormal are either shut out from the after-world or go to a different place or to a separate division of the spirit land.

The Yabim of New Guinea, in their world of ghosts, have special areas for those who have been hanged and those devoured by sharks and crocodiles; and their neighbors the Kai assign separate places to the slain and the bewitched. The Kayans of Borneo reserve one region for the drowned and another for women dying in childbirth — in each case a land of idleness and plenty. In the happy sky



land of the Central Eskimo and of the ancient Mexicans there was the same provision for such women. The Eskimo added suicides and the murdered; and the Mexicans had another paradise for those who had died by drowning or a bolt of lightning, and a gloomy underworld for those who died of sickness or old age.

More varied and interesting than the tests which are based on a man's status or record in life are those that await him after death. These ordeals confront him on his journey to the after-world and often determine where he will go and how he will fare.

One familiar type of ordeal is to pass some kind of guardian who must be propitiated. Sometimes, as with the African Yoruba, it is the warder of the gates of the ghostly realm who must receive a liberal fee. In Indonesia the fee is often paid in the form of grave gifts made at burial. The Araucanians of South America imagined an evil old woman who met the souls and demanded tribute. If one of them refused a gift, she would poke out his eye. Elsewhere the guardians are more picturesque and less easily mollified. Several varieties appear among the Punans of Borneo — such as a helmeted hornbill who terrifies ghosts with his screams and makes them fall into a deep pool where a fish will eat them up. Before reaching the underworld of New Caledonia the souls must run the gauntlet of a grim fisherman who catches them in his net and vents his fury on them before he lets them pass. And in Ankola two spirits are thought to keep watch near a trap that snaps on the soul who answers them with lies and crushes him in a second death.

A dog is another favorite kind of guardian. The Hurons and Iroquois believed in a dog who guarded the bridge



that spanned the river of death. The tribes of Sarawak look forward to passing a similar watch-dog. If he is given a large bead to eat, the ghost can slip by while the animal is choking on the mouthful. More famous are the dogs of Yama who in early Vedic times protected the highest heaven of the Hindus and kept out unworthy spirits. A Vedic hymn describes them as 'the two sons of Sarama, the two dogs, four-eyed and brindled, watchers of the pathway, broad-nosed and brown-colored.' One is called 'Spot' and the other 'Black'; and the souls are warned to hurry past their gnashing teeth and join 'the Fathers' in Yama's abode. The same dogs are described as hunting out the living who are marked for death and guiding them to their future home. Not unlike these roaming dogs are the dogs of the King of the Underworld in Welsh folk-belief. Of hideous aspect, with huge red spots and large black patches, they haunt the lonely valleys and run in pursuit of men who are destined soon to die. Of all such dogs, however, the ugliest was the classical Cerberus. He first appears by name in Hesiod as 'the brazen-voiced hound of Hades,' who admits all but lets none out. The honey-cake with which it is wise to feed him became the familiar 'sop to Cerberus.' Apollodorus describes him as having three heads and a dragon tail, and Virgil tells how 'Cerberus, whose triple-throated barking echoes through these realms, lies stretched immense across his den.' His neck is bristling with snakes, and when the Sibyl throws him a cake, ~~he~~ he opens his three throats and snaps it up. Even in modern times the folklore of Greece and Albania retains the memory of this malignant hound of whom even the King of the Dead is afraid.

Other forms of ordeals are not furnished by men or



animals but by the natural geography of the after-world. In one of the New Hebrides islands the ghost has to run along a line of hills and vault across a deep chasm. The Bahnars of Indo-China tell of a fearful path all souls must travel. At one point they must avoid two gigantic scissor-blades and at another they must slip between two huge rocks that are constantly striking against each other. The Ojibways conceived the unique idea of a strawberry ordeal. In the path of souls, they said, grew an enormous strawberry, and whoever ate of it was doomed at once to a second death.

Less eccentric than these ordeals is the simple notion of a river or lake to be crossed, usually by ferry. Everyone knows of the Styx and the ferryman Charon. But the Fiji Islanders, too, have a rude ghostly ferryman who paddles a canoe, and the Ijaw of Southern Nigeria believe in an old woman who ferries the spirits across the river of death, and like the Greeks they bury with the corpse a fee for the passage. The Egyptian ferryman 'Facing-backwards' poled his boat across the river to the 'Fields of Earu,' and the same pilot appears in the great 'lily-lake' that led to the heaven of the sun-god. Even the waiting ghost of a Pharaoh had to cajole him with specious pleas and flattery.

By all odds the most familiar ordeal is the famous Bridge Test — a belief so common as to be found (without exhaustive research) among at least forty different tribes and peoples.<sup>1</sup> The main idea is simple: at some point in the

<sup>1</sup> Belief in some form of an after-world bridge is found among the Kagoro of Nigeria and certain Gold Coast Negroes; in the East India islands among one or more tribes in or near Sumatra, Borneo, Celebes, and New Guinea; among the Solomon Islanders in Melanesia, the natives of Ponape in Micronesia, and the Maori of New Zealand; among the Eastern Semang of the Malay Peninsula, the Bahnars of Indo-China, and the Todas of India; among the Indians of Peru and Colombia, the Eskimo, the Tlingits of Alaska,



journey to the spirit world a river, pool, or chasm must be crossed by a narrow bridge. Those who can pass in safety reach their destination; the others are cast down to a tragic or an unknown fate. Out of two score examples we may select a few from widely scattered points and different levels of culture.

The Choctaws had a long barkless pine log over a deep and dreadful river, with a happy hunting-ground for the successful and a dark and hungry land for others. For the Todas the underworld was reached by crossing a ravine on a slim thread. Those who fell off plunged into a river to be bitten by leeches. Among the Galelarese of Indonesia the bridge was a plank or tree-trunk that swayed and rocked giddily under the feet of those who crossed, and the bridge of the Bahnars was a slippery revolving log which ended over an empty space that must be jumped. Still worse were the snake bridges of the Ojibways and Papuans.

In these and other cases the bridge is a real test passed by those who cross and failed by those who do not. Elsewhere the qualifications are not mere courage and agility, but other virtues or marks which have no reference to the bridge. The bridge is thus no longer an ordeal, but the occasion for executing judgment. In parts of New Guinea, for instance, we find the belief that the soul must cross a great water by a ladder. Here it meets a spirit who demands its tribal earrings and armbands and if it cannot produce them, it is tripped up on the ladder and falls into

and the Ojibways, Omaha, Cherokees, Hurons, Algonquins, and Dakotas; in the folklore and religious literature of the Chinese Buddhists, the early Hindus, the Persians, and the Moslems; among the Jews of the Caucasus, the Transylvanian gypsies, and the modern Greeks; in Celtic folk-belief; and in such medieval Christian literature as 'The Vision of Paul,' 'The Vision of Adamnan,' 'The Vision of Alberic,' 'The Vision of Tundale,' 'The Vision of Thurcill,' and the story of Sir Owen's visit to 'Saint Patrick's Purgatory.'



the water. According to other tribes the guardian of the bridge will let only those pass who can show the right tattoo marks or who have taken the heads of many enemies or who have been generous in giving feasts.

Of the same mixed type are the bridge 'tests' found in higher religions where much more than agility is demanded of a good soul. Though we cannot here consider their systems of rewards and punishments, it is worth noting how often this rudimentary feature survives in other-world geography.

In all stages of the Persian religion of Zoroastrianism there was a belief in the famous Cinvat Bridge, which was swung across the abyss of hell from the summit of one mythical mountain to the peak of another. The moral judgment of each spirit took place before he reached the bridge, so the perilous passage was not to obtain the verdict but to carry it out. When the souls of the righteous started to cross, the bridge became as broad as the length of nine spears that they might pass with ease to the heaven beyond; but the wicked found it as narrow as the edge of a razor and fell headlong into the gulf below. According to Mohammedan doctrine a similar bridge confronts the spirit after judgment has been passed. The good cross swiftly to paradise and the evil fall over into hell. Christian legend and folklore are no less familiar with the idea of a bridge. It appears in many of the medieval 'visions' of the next world. In the Irish *Vision of Adamnan*, for example, which probably dates from the tenth century, we read of an immense valley beyond the first region of hell. 'An enormous bridge spans the glen.... Three companies seek to pass over it, but not all succeed. One company find the bridge to be of an ample width, from beginning to end, till



they win across the fiery glen, safe and sound.... The second company find it narrow at first but broad afterwards.... But for the last company the bridge is broad at first but strait and narrow thereafter, until they fall from the midst of it into that same perilous glen.' And in the twelfth-century *Vision of Alberic* an iron bridge spans the river of burning pitch that issues from hell. For the virtuous it is a broad and easy path but under the feet of sinners it grows as narrow as a thread.

To cite these few examples of ordeals that are often to be met with gives no idea of the rich variety that appears among peoples of higher civilization like the ancient Mexicans and Egyptians. The human imagination, working through centuries, can invent an almost indefinite number of adventures that await the soul. The journey to the Mexican after-world of Mictlantecutli required four days crowded with terrors. At one point there were wild demons to bar the path; at another two mountains clashed together, threatening to crush the soul; at still another a huge snake lay in wait. After that there were deserts and hills to be traversed in the effort to avoid a voracious crocodile, and at length a river had to be crossed on the back of a red dog. But these tests were few compared with the varied perils that beset the Egyptians. Confronted as they were with so many hideous possibilities, it naturally occurred to these peoples to make use of magical charms. When similar adventures threatened them in this life they were wont to turn for aid to their priests, and they found these magicians equally ready to offer assistance to the departed soul. The constant use of magic and the profound belief in its powers were thus extended, in Mexico and Egypt, to the care of the deceased on their dangerous journey.



The Coffin Texts of the Egyptian Middle Kingdom and especially the later *Book of the Dead* abound in charms for the safety of the soul, to be recited at all the critical moments. Here are a few of the scores of chapter titles in the collection known as *The Book of the Dead*. 'Chapter of not letting the heart of a man be taken away from him in the underworld,' 'Chapter of repulsing serpents,' 'Chapter of beating back the crocodile that cometh to carry away the magical words from the spirit in the underworld,' 'Chapter of not letting the head of a man be cut off from him in the underworld,' 'Chapter of not allowing the body of a man to moulder away and of delivering him from those who devour the souls,' 'Chapter of drinking water and of not being burnt by fire in the underworld,' and another chapter to enable the dead in various animal forms to 'journey about over the earth among the living.' Once the practice of using these charms had been well established, the priests naturally multiplied the number of perils that they might have the more charms to sell. And as the future of the departed grew ever more painfully precarious no one profited but the priests.

It will be quite clear from all that we have seen that below the level of the higher religions which concern themselves with the salvation of the soul, the distinctions observed in the after-life are seldom of a moral nature. A few faint suggestions of a moral judgment may be noted in the heaven of the early Hindus where truthfulness and courage as well as piety toward the gods are necessary for admission; and even certain barbarous tribes like the Banks Islanders and the Ojibway Indians are reported to exclude from their paradise thieves and liars, cowards and murderers. But the one clear example of moral requirements we find only in Egypt.



Even as early as the Pyramid Age there are declarations of moral worth recorded in the tombs as an aid to the future bliss of the departed. A monarch of the twenty-seventh century before Christ left this record of his righteous life: 'I gave bread to all the hungry.... I clothed him who was naked.... I never oppressed one in possession of his property.... I spake and told that which was good.... I spake no lie, for I was one beloved of his father, praised of his mother, excellent in character to his brother, and amiable [to his sister].' These assertions may have been meant to impress the living, but it is plain that they were also directed to the gods. As another king tells us in so many words, 'I never spoke evil of any one to his superior; I desired that it might be well with me in the presence of the great god [Re].' The sun-god was clearly the first great champion of morality and the judge of those who would dwell with him. A thousand years later, however, it was Osiris of the underworld who had become the moral judge of the soul, and his judgment must be met not only by kings and nobles but by all the departed. Even the Book of the Dead, with all its magical apparatus, has room for several descriptions of the Judgment of Osiris and of the ethical standards it demands. Osiris is depicted as sitting enthroned at the end of a hall, along which other gods are ranged. In the midst stand the balances for weighing the soul, held by the god Anubis, with the scribe Thoth at hand to record the result. The spirit awaiting sentence is allowed to declare his innocence in words like these: 'I have not committed any fraud or evil against men. I have not committed murder. I have not committed adultery. I have not taken milk from the mouths of children. I have not, as overseer, caused a man to do more than his



day's work. I have not taken cattle in their pasture. I have not turned aside the water from a neighbor's field at the time of inundation. I gave bread to the hungry, water to the thirsty, clothing to the naked, succor to him who was in need. I harmed not a child, I injured not a widow.' Side by side with these declarations of moral virtue are others that assert how innocent is the man of all offences toward the gods: 'I have not done that which is an abomination to the gods. I have not spoiled the bread of offerings in the temples. I have not taken in nets the birds of the gods. I have not driven back the herds of the temple lands.'

After all protestations have been made the heart of the dead man is weighed in the scales against the symbol of truth. If he is found righteous he receives again his heart that he may enter as a whole man upon the new life. What happens if the judgment goes against him is not clear. But the forbidding presence of a female hippopotamus — 'the devourer of the Underworld' — is unpleasantly suggestive.

Yet despite the notable record of the Egyptians in establishing a moral judgment of the dead long before it appeared in any other religion, this ethical element was never central or primary. It was always fused and confused with their stronger belief in magic. Since magic could be used to escape the varied physical perils of the after-world, it even came to be used as a help to passing moral ordeals. The declarations of innocence, of which we have given examples, were multiplied in large numbers by scribes and priests and sold to the people. Blank spaces were left for the names so that any sinner could buy a statement exalting his virtues. More than that, the priests were ready to offer special charms for the purpose of concealing



vices of the deceased and securing a favorable verdict when the test of Osiris came. One such magic spell is called 'Chapter of preventing that a man's heart oppose him in the nether world.' And on the heart of a corpse would be placed a scarab with the legend, 'O my heart, rise not up against me as a witness.'

The same scheme is familiar to Chinese Buddhists and Taoists, despite the purely moral nature of their judgment in the next world. One Taoist magical talisman sold by priests is in the form of a petition to the god Lao-Kün. It reads as follows: 'This talisman has been granted by Lao-Kün for the benefit of all the dead. It will help to cleanse their bodies, refine their virtues, blot out their faults, render them stainless, and utterly efface even the last remnant of the sins which they have committed in a previous existence. Cleansed from all earthly dross, they shall be deemed worthy to be admitted into the presence of Yen-wang [the Ruler of Hades].'

Finally, it is as a form of magic that we must classify the most famous of all the Egyptian devices for obtaining felicity in the after-life — identification with Osiris the God of the Dead. In one of many forms of the familiar myth, Osiris is murdered by his brother Set, but his devoted son Horus, with the aid of magic rites, pieces together the dismembered body and restores him to life, after which Osiris becomes king of the realms of the dead. If Osiris could die and live again, so, it was thought, might others. The one requisite was to identify the dead man with Osiris and to perform over him the same ceremonies by which Horus had raised his father. In the earliest age it was only the king who could thus become Osiris. In his tomb might be inscribed, as in one pyramid text, the magic words, 'As



he [Osiris] lives, this king Unis lives; as he dies not, this king Unis dies not; as he perishes not, this king Unis perishes not.' In other texts the king's body, flesh, and bones are stated to be those of Osiris. And so all the filial care which Osiris had once received from Horus now became the portion of the king. 'Horus collects for thee thy limbs that he may put thee together without any lack in thee.'

Beginning as a mode of royal salvation, the myth and its rites were gradually thought to apply to all men, and the use of the saving magic was democratized. In this later time the identification of the dead began at the funeral, for the ceremony was meant to be an exact reproduction of what had once taken place around the coffin of Osiris. The chief aim was to restore to the deceased all his bodily functions in preparation for the long journey to the next world. The mummy was fashioned like the image of Osiris; the royal insignia were painted on the inside of the coffin; and as a final formula each body was labelled 'Osiris so-and-so.' Thus equipped the soul would pass to a life of eternal bliss in the presence of its divine sovereign.



## FOREWORD

THE rudimentary beliefs about the after-life which we have been reviewing have little connection with religion. In ancestor worship, of course, the spirits themselves are the object of worship; gods of the other world are often to be found; and in the Egyptian creed at its highest, eternal welfare depends in part on union with a god. In general, however, the religions appropriate to this lower level of thought do not concern themselves with the life after death, and therefore, as we have seen, distinctions beyond the grave are seldom to be described as rewards and punishments.

The fundamental difference between the ideas we have already noted and those which remain to be considered is due to the rise of a new type of religion, a type which fixes attention on the life to come. The contrast between rudimentary and advanced ideas about the fate of the soul reflects the contrast between lower and higher beliefs in religion. To understand the one development, then, we must glance at the other.

If we had to simplify the stages of religion, we might roughly group them as three. The first we might name by the word *spirits*, the second by the word *gods*, and the third by the word *salvation*. Spirits, gods, salvation — these are three grades in ascending order. By 'spirits' we mean the belief in and the worship of spirits in nature, in animals, and in men. It includes both nature worship and ancestor worship. More advanced is the belief in and the worship of gods, for gods are higher beings than spirits. Gods, that



is, are more developed and civilized than spirits, since their worshippers are more developed and civilized than the worshippers of spirits. At this level may be placed the state religions of ancient Egypt, Babylonia, Greece, and Rome, and the living religions of Shinto in Japan and Confucianism in China. The religion of spirits, or 'animism,' and the religion of many gods, or 'polytheism,' are in one respect essentially the same. Wide as may be the difference in culture among their adherents, they are both fundamentally *nature* religions. And for three reasons they deserve that name. In the first place, the spirits and gods, for the most part, are nature spirits and nature gods (or once were) — spirits of mountains, rivers, and trees, or gods of sky, sun, and ocean. Furthermore, these spirits and gods are worshipped to satisfy *natural* wants — the desire for good weather or abundant crops or riches or children or prosperity. Finally — and this is the point that concerns our theme — they are almost entirely concerned with material welfare in *this* life. A future life there may be, but it is not one to which the aims and the promises of religion apply.

Far above the two lower grades is the third type, which we have called *salvation*. These highest religions do not simply offer the material goods that are limited to this life. They offer redemption, and are therefore called Redemptive Religions. They offer a spiritual salvation to the individual soul, a salvation not merely in this life but chiefly in the life to come. Their message is thus a gospel both of redemption and of eternal life. Their most characteristic note is the promise of a blessed immortality. The Greek 'mystery religions,' Zoroastrianism in Persia, Buddhism, later Judaism, Christianity, and Mohammedanism



## CHAPTER XVI

### RETRIBUTION BY TRANSMIGRATION

How widespread among uncivilized tribes is the belief in the transmigration of souls we have already had occasion to notice. According to their view, as we discovered, the passage of souls into human or animal shape is either quite haphazard or is determined by heredity and tribal status. It is almost never a reward or punishment for a good or evil life. But when transmigration is found among civilized peoples with higher religions it takes the form of *retribution*. And far more completely than elsewhere that creed has prevailed in India.

Even before the Hindus had developed a religion of salvation they had achieved the idea of reincarnation on a moral basis. In their earliest literature the thought does not appear; but by the time that their first philosophers were producing the Upanishads in the seventh or eighth centuries before Christ, the new doctrine had emerged; and for twenty-five hundred years it has dominated Hindu belief. The main idea is simple. The present state of any soul has been determined by its past deeds, good or evil; and the future state of any soul will be determined by its present and future deeds, good or evil. The Sanskrit word for 'deed' is *karma*, and this law of transmigration is therefore called the law of *karma*. It is properly a 'law,' like the 'laws' of nature, for it requires no judgment, human or divine; it works automatically and inevitably.

Again and again, in varied forms, the system is described



in the sacred books. There is constant reference to 'the bright and dark fruits of action,' and the reason is plain. 'According as a man acts and behaves, so is he born; he who does good is born as a good man, he who does evil is born as a bad man, by holy works he becomes holy, wicked by wicked... according to his deeds so is his destiny.' 'Karma, which springs from the mind, from speech, and from the body, produces either good or evil results; by karma are caused the various conditions of men, the highest, the middling, and the lowest.' (As is his desire, so is his will, and as is his will, so is his deed; and whatever deed he does, that will he reap.) 'The incarnate self assumes successively in various places various forms, in accordance with his deeds.' 'No man is the dispenser of his own destiny. The actions done in a former life are seen to produce fruits in this. The soul is born again with its accumulated load of karma. By performing only virtuous actions it attains to the state of the celestials. By a combination of good and bad actions, it acquires the state of human beings. By indulgence in sensuality and similar vices, it is born among the lower animals.' In a quaint simile one Upanishad depicts the process: 'As a caterpillar which has wriggled to the tip of a blade of grass draws itself over to a new blade, so does this man, after he has put aside his body, draw himself over to a new existence.... As is his deed so is his destiny.'

The thought of retribution is clear enough, and it is equally plain that no personal judgment is involved. Karma, on the contrary, is 'a patient, impersonal process of law.' Our western science has discovered the law of 'the conservation of energy' in the physical world, in obedience to which no scrap of matter or ounce of force is ever lost.



The law of karma carries the same principle into the moral sphere; for karma might well be described as the conservation of moral energy, so that no deed, good or bad, is ever lost. Somewhere, somehow, it will take effect. Its inevitable operation, its fatal accuracy, is described in figures like these: 'In his new existence a man's good and evil acts follow him like a shadow, and the consequences thereof make his life either pleasant or painful'; and, still more picturesquely, 'The deed previously done follows after the doer, as among a thousand cows a calf finds its mother.'

Though the general principle is simple, its application is infinitely varied. No people so imaginative as the Indians and so fond of speculation could be content to state the law baldly, and let it go at that. Quite naturally, then, all kinds of details have been elaborated by priestly law-givers who were ready enough to tell the less learned just what would happen to various kinds of sinners. As early as the Upanishads there was an attempt to be specific. In one we read that good conduct will lead to rebirth as a Brahman, a Kshatriya, or a Vaisya (the three higher castes), while evil conduct will lead to evil rebirths as an outcaste, a dog, or a swine. In another we are told that 'according to his deeds and according to his knowledge, a man is born again here as a worm, or as an insect, or as a fish, or as a bird, or as a lion, or as a boar, or as a serpent, or as a tiger, or as a man, or as some other in this or that condition.' But in later centuries when the priests had long been exercising their ingenuity, we note in the law books more inventive efforts to make the punishment fit the crime. The Laws of Manu tell us that 'men who delight in doing hurt become carnivorous animals; those who eat forbidden food, worms; those who steal, creatures consuming their own kind. For



stealing grain a man becomes a rat, for stealing honey a stinging insect, for stealing milk a crow, for stealing meat a vulture, for stealing fat a cormorant, for stealing salt a cricket, for stealing linen a frog, for stealing molasses a flying-fox, for stealing a woman a bear, for stealing vehicles a camel.' Many of these verdicts are repeated in the Institutes of Vishnu with such interesting additions as these: 'One who has stolen oil becomes a cockroach, one who has stolen a cow becomes an iguana, one who has stolen vegetables becomes a peacock, one who has stolen grain becomes a porcupine, one who has stolen a horse becomes a tiger, one who has stolen fruits becomes an ape, one who has stolen an elephant becomes a tortoise.' And elsewhere in the same work there is a summary to this effect: 'The evil-doers pass into animal bodies. Criminals in the highest degree enter the bodies of all plants successively. Mortal sinners enter the bodies of worm or insects. Minor offenders enter the bodies of birds. Criminals in the fourth degree enter the bodies of aquatic animals.'

Since most of these legal handbooks were written by Brahmans who could scarcely help having in mind their own trials and troubles, there is ample evidence that they made good use of their supreme authority in order to guard their own interests. The slayer of a Brahman is doomed to enter the body of a dog or goat or ass. Whoever dishonors a Brahman's wife will enter a hundred times the forms of grasses, shrubs, and creepers. According to another prophet's threat, the murderer of a Brahman, in his next rebirth, will suffer from tuberculosis; if he steals a Brahman's food he will have dyspepsia; and if he curses a Brahman, he will be reborn afflicted with dumbness.

It is not only pride of caste, however, that moves the



authors of sacred literature to protect themselves. Sometimes it is sectarian intolerance. One of the schools of Buddhism, for example, produced a notable work in the first century called 'The Lotus of the True Law.' Its composers were certain that it contained the whole truth, and yet were fearful that it might not be recognized as the last and best word about salvation. So they inserted in it a sobering forecast of the fate of those who scorned it. Modern 'intellectuals' who think that Buddhist literature is all sweetness and light and that Christianity has a monopoly of sectarian rancor, might well glance at this vindictive passage. It declares that those who despise The Lotus of the True Law or wrong the monks who teach it will be reborn as dogs or jackals, covered with sores, hairless and itchy, brutally tormented by village boys. Or they will become camels and asses, beaten with whips. If they find rebirth as men, they will be crippled, maimed, crooked, one-eyed, blind, dull, foul of breath, and leprous, always needy, feeble, and diseased, and given to robbery and assaults. 'That is the evil result of scorning this sacred book.'

Though all the Indian religions have accepted the doctrine of transmigration according to karma, none has developed it with more careful regard to system than has Buddhism; and with the spread of Buddhism that scheme became familiar beyond the borders of India as far as China and Japan. In the later form of Buddhism known as Mahayana it is taught that the world of life is divided into six grades. Counting from the highest downward, they are these: the heavens (where dwell the gods), men, *asuras* or demons, animals, *pretas* or hungry ghosts, and hells. Men and animals are of course familiar classes. Of heavens and



hells we shall treat in a later chapter; they, too, were included in the system of transmigration as places where rebirth might occur. The *asuras* were a sort of hybrid between men and animals, given to strife and bloodshed. The *pretas* were fearful creatures, rejoicing in evil and always eager to do harm. In a Chinese Buddhist work they are described under thirty-six heads of which these are only a few — flat-bodied, needle-mouthed, filth-eaters, hair-eaters, blood-suckers, fever-makers, secret pryers, spirit rappers, body-snatchers, lust-longers, ash-feeders, tree-dwellers, and body-killers.

According to Buddhist doctrine the soul, as long as it is unredeemed, moves up and down forever upon this ladder of ascent and descent, rising or falling according to its deeds. Men of purest life will mount to the heavens and commune with resplendent gods. Others will be embodied once more in human form. Still others will find reincarnation as *pretas*, especially the covetous and stingy. The worst criminals are destined to hell; but the less wicked may reappear as animals, in lowly shape as gnats or crickets, or perhaps in the highest group — dragons, elephants, lions, or roc-birds.

It is Buddhism, too, which has most to say about the interesting possibility of remembering our past lives. To the common objection that if we had had another existence they would remain in our memories, Buddhism simply replies that some men can remember them. Under certain exceptional conditions of great mental concentration wise men can recall many of their former births, and Buddhist literature abounds in examples. The Buddha himself, of course, could tell of scores. At one time or another, in the remote past, he had been a stag, a partridge, an elephant,



and a king of the monkeys. In other ages he had been an ascetic hermit, a farmer, a king's minister, and even the god Sakka. And precisely the same idea was known in Greece. The philosopher Pythagoras, who believed in transmigration, declared that purified souls like himself could recall their former births, and Empedocles asserted that in time past he had been a girl, a bush, a bird, and a fish.

This creed of transmigration is by no means a mere theory of priests and teachers found in books alone. In every Buddhist country it has colored the thought of the masses and found its way into legend and folklore. Popular tales about rebirth, so abundant in China and Japan, are more often than not the product of Buddhist influence. As only one of a thousand we may cite the story of Yang Hu in the fourth century. When he was five years old he asked his nurse to give him his metal ring to play with. When she replied that he had never had one, he went at once to a mulberry tree in a neighbor's garden and pulled out the ring; and the frightened owner confessed that the ring had once belonged to his dead child. A much later tale is told of the servant of a Chinese governor. On one occasion the man explained to his mistress that he had previously been a pet fox which she had owned as a girl, and had later been a beggar before his present birth, so that during the course of her one life he had been leading three. And within the last few years when a tenant on the property of a Chinese college was gored by a water buffalo and died, all his family were certain that the buffalo was the incarnation of an enemy, and insisted that it be severely beaten and sold.

But the effect of belief in the transmigration of souls upon the people of China and Japan is almost trivial compared



with its intense grip on the people of India, where for so many ages it has controlled and moulded popular thought. The conception of 'the round of rebirth' or 'the wheel of existence' is everywhere taken for granted, and the atmosphere of spiritual depression which it engenders has saturated the fibre of the Hindu race. Depression has been the result because the cycle of rebirth is endless. If the Hindu could view his life as only a prelude to something higher and better, or even if he could see it as only a brief span before extinction, he might be less pessimistic about its character. He would not then regard suffering as the keynote of existence. But if all that he must endure in one life is to be repeated with variations through an infinite round of future lives (some better perhaps, but others no doubt worse) there arises a sense of utter futility — the meaningless futility of a squirrel in a cage or a beast of burden in a treadmill. The consolation that no state is permanent and that hope of rising higher may always be cherished is obliterated by the oppressive consciousness that there is no end. The weariness of one who faces that prospect is revealed in a Bengali hymn to the goddess Durga: 'Mother, how often will you drive me round and round the wheel of Being, like a blindfold ox that grinds the oil? Binding me to the log of the world, you urge me round incessantly.... After wandering through eight million rebirths, in form of beast and bird, still the door of the womb is not closed to me, but sorely hurt I come again.' ✕

If personal pessimism is one outcome of the karma doctrine, another is social stagnation. For belief in karma is a form of fatalism. All that we are and all that our neighbors are, has been long since determined by the deeds of the past. What is has had to be. From such a view of life



arise rigidity in the social order and a callous acquiescence in human suffering. By the social system of India the greater part of the population is divided into more than two thousand castes, largely based on trade and occupation. These groups are ranked from high to low, and their members are forbidden by custom to eat together or to intermarry. The whole scheme by which society is thus arranged in fixed layers has served to check the liberty of the individual, to limit human sympathies, and to hinder national growth. Still worse is the attitude it requires toward the fifty million outcastes who are so low in the social scale that their very presence brings pollution to a caste man and who are therefore called 'the untouchables' — degraded, down-trodden, and despised. The belief in karma did not create the caste system, but it grew up with it and reinforced it. Whatever the social and economic causes may be, it is the doctrine of karma which asserts that a man is born into a particular caste as a reward or a punishment for deeds he has done in a previous existence. Thus karma can operate to justify and solidify the caste system, so that caste may well be called 'the natural social expression of transmigration.' By the resistless working of the great law men are set where they belong, whether in the company of proud Brahmans or among the dregs of humanity. Whatever differences exist are not only fitting but inevitable. And the same paralysing creed accounts for human suffering and deformity. In Indian belief there is no undeserved suffering caused by heredity or social neglect. All such pain is merited. The German scholar Deussen tells us how he met an old pundit at Jaipur. 'He approached me groping his way. They told me that he was completely blind. Not knowing that he had been



blind from birth, I sympathized with him and asked by what unfortunate accident the loss of his sight had occurred. Immediately and without showing any sign whatever of bitterness, the answer was ready to his lips: "By some crime committed in a former birth." The old man well knew what the sacred Laws of Manu had been teaching his people for centuries: 'In consequence of a remnant of guilt of former crimes are born idiots, dumb, blind, deaf, and deformed men, *who are all despised by the virtuous.*' No wonder that India has had to turn to the West for stimulus to social reform, for by her own creed it is declared that to better the lot of the unfortunate is only to tamper vainly with an immutable law.

It has been necessary to recall the consequences of faith in the law of karma if we would understand how universal is the dread of that kind of life beyond death which it prescribes. Retribution by endless transmigration is a prospect that appals; and yet it is a system accepted without question by all the great philosophies and religions of India — Brahmanism, Buddhism, Vedantism, Jainism, Sikhism, Hinduism, and even by modern sects like the Theosophists and the Arya Samaj. If they merely accepted the law as a hopeless fact, the situation would indeed be desperate. But they are all philosophies and religions of *salvation*, and what they promise is not transmigration according to karma but *redemption* from that fate. In every case their central aim is to offer a saving remedy, and that remedy takes the form of escape from the round of rebirth. All the greater systems of religion and of thought present themselves as paths to release — deliverance from karma. The paths are many but the longed-for goal is one.

One path is offered by the Vedanta philosophy of which



we find the first traces in the Upanishads. Here the way of escape is through mystical experience. To know that all that is fleeting and changeable in life is illusion, to give up desire for what is transitory, and to realize the union of one's innermost soul with the World Soul, the unchanging Absolute — that is release. The bonds of karma are then dissolved, and the finite self is lost in the Infinite Self. 'He who has understanding, who is mindful and ever pure, reaches the goal from which he is born no more.' 'They who have ascertained the meaning of the Vedanta knowledge, ascetics with natures purified through the application of renunciation — they are all liberated beyond death.'

In early Buddhism the way of salvation lay through the extinction of all thirst and craving — even craving for a future life — since it is this urgent desire for life and the sham pleasures of life which ever produces rebirth. The goal is beyond the turmoil of existence as we know it, above the flux of birth and death, in the passionless peace of Nirvana.

Another path to redemption is opened by the religion known as Hinduism — that group of cults to which the majority of Indians are attached today. Salvation, in their view, is achieved by devotion to personal savior-gods like Krishna and Rama — the warm intense faith called *bhakti*. Complete surrender to the redemptive power of the god will free the devout believer from the chains of karma. Divine grace, responding to devotion, can loose the bonds and admit the believer to immortal bliss.

As interpreted by thoughtful Hindus in all ages, no Indian religion or philosophy desires or promises a personal immortality. In all Hindu doctrine personality is



a limitation to overcome, a hindrance to be outgrown, through some inner experience in which the self is transcended — by attaining the state of Nirvana or by union with the Absolute. And one reason for this traditional prejudice against personality is that the personal soul has always been associated with the round of rebirth. But in appealing to the masses, Brahmanism, Buddhism, and Hinduism alike have always needed to talk a simpler language and to picture release from transmigration as something more colorful and attractive than the loss of self in mystical union with an impersonal Divine. In popular Buddhism and Hinduism, therefore, deliverance from transmigration is promised in the form of a welcome into some blessed paradise from which there is no return to earthly life — like the Pure Land of the Buddha Amitabha or the heaven of Indra.

In another field of high civilization the doctrine of the transmigration of souls was widely known. In Greece at first, and throughout the Mediterranean world in the days of imperial Rome, 'metempsychosis,' as the Greeks called it, was familiar teaching. The close resemblance of this creed to Indian belief has led many to suppose that it was of Hindu origin, imported into Greece; but for this borrowing there is no clear evidence. To a discerning eye the difference between the Indian scheme and the Hellenistic is as marked as the likeness. As the most important point of all, in western doctrine transmigration was not eternal.

Among Greeks and Romans belief in transmigration never possessed the popular mind. It was never accepted by the masses, and therefore had little effect on the racial temper and outlook. Since it was largely confined to



philosophers and their disciples we must look to their teachings for examples.

The nearest approach to popularity was among the devotees of Orphism. According to their system of thought, the soul of man is divine, but because of an 'ancient guilt'—a mythical 'fall'—it has been exiled to earth. There it is condemned to undergo long ages of expiation and purification. In the course of its progress the soul alternates between lives in mortal bodies and periods in Hades. Thus for the Orphic as for the Hindu there is a 'wheel of birth,' and the phrase is Greek as well as Indian. 'Wherefore the changing soul of man, in the cycles of time, passes into various creatures: sometimes it enters a horse... again it is a sheep, then a bird drear to see; again it has the form of a dog with heavy voice, or as a chill snake creeps along the ground.' But like the Hindu religions of redemption, Orphism can offer relief. By following its ascetic way of life and by receiving its sacraments the believer is freed from future births, and, numbered among 'the Pure,' he will dwell beneath the earth in the world of souls, 'in the fair meadows of deep-running Acheron,' communing with the gods.

Of the same type is the doctrine of Pythagoras who taught in southern Italy in the sixth century before Christ, when Orphism was beginning its career. He and his disciples believed that the human soul is an immortal being confined in the prison of the body and that its life here below is a long purgation, now in Hades and again in bodies of men or animals. By absorbing the sacred knowledge of his sect and leading an ascetic life a man might liberate his spirit from bondage and attain unfettered immortality. In Pythagoreanism this view of human destiny



and of the way of salvation was widely accepted. But its range of influence was vastly extended when Plato embodied in his own philosophy the essence of its creed. Holding the same view of the soul as an immortal exile, Plato was interested in the scheme of transmigration. In the *Phædrus* he writes that 'there is a law of Destiny that the soul... when she... fails to behold the vision of truth, and through some ill hap sinks beneath the double load of forgetfulness and vice... shall at her first birth pass, not into any other animal, but only into man; and the soul which has seen most of truth shall come to birth as a philosopher, or artist, or some musical and loving nature; that which has seen truth in the second degree shall be a righteous king or lordly warrior; the soul which is of the third class shall be a politician, or economist, or trader; the fourth shall be a lover of gymnastic toils, or a physician; the fifth a prophet or hierophant; to the sixth a poet or some other imitative artist will be appropriate; to the seventh the life of an artisan or husbandman; to the eighth that of a sophist or demagogue; to the ninth that of a tyrant; — all these are states of probation, in which he who lives righteously improves, and he who lives unrighteously deteriorates his lot... ten thousand years must elapse before the soul can return to the place from which she came.'

But at this point we find a new feature of the system — a change of Plato's own invention. 'At the end of the first thousand years [in some purgatory or heaven] the good souls and also the evil souls both come to draw lots and choose their second life, and they may take any which they like. The soul of a man may pass into the life of a beast, or from the beast return again into the man. But the soul of him who has never seen the truth will not pass into the



human form.' This novel plan of choosing Plato describes more fully in his *Republic* where he tells how Er the Pamphylian visited the underworld and saw how the souls behaved. An official spread out before the spirits his set of sample lives from which they might select. 'There were all sorts of lives — of every animal and of man in every condition.' The canny Odysseus 'went about for a considerable time in search of the life of a private man who had no cares; he had some difficulty in finding this, which was lying about and had been neglected by everybody else; and when he saw it, he said that he would have done the same had he been first instead of last, and that he was delighted at his choice.' 'And not only did men pass into animals, but I must also mention that there were animals tame and wild who changed into one another and into corresponding human natures — the good into the gentle and the evil into the savage.'

From the days of Plato onward we can trace the thought of metempsychosis through Greek and Latin literature. To glance at only two examples, it appears in Virgil's *Æneid* and again in Sallust, who contends, in words that might come from a Hindu sage, that 'the transmigration of souls can be proved from the congenital afflictions of persons. For why are some born blind, others paralytic, others with some sickness in the soul itself?' But the extent to which the doctrine permeated the minds of thoughtful men in the later Roman empire is largely due to a revival of the teaching of earlier masters in the great movements of Neo-Pythagoreanism and Neoplatonism. With changes and additions of their own, Plotinus, Porphyry, and other leaders of their day adopted the idea of transmigration and aided its survival even after the triumph of Christianity.



From the Christian point of view, of course, this alien creed was a hateful heresy, and again and again the Church Fathers assail it in their writings. They had to meet it not only in the fading philosophy of paganism but also in the flourishing heresy of Manichæism, which held the great Augustine captive for nine years before he became a Christian. And an offshoot of the same sect blossomed in Europe when the Cathari began to gather converts, spreading in southern France as late as the eleventh century, and extinguished only by the savage excesses of the Albigensian Crusade.

*Q. 1162*



*II. Hindu Nayak House*

## CHAPTER XVII

### THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY


FROM the thought of civilized men about the after-life there have arisen, as we have seen, three notable doctrines. Two of these we have surveyed — the Greek idea of the immortality of the soul to be achieved through union with the Divine, and the Hindu idea of retribution by transmigration. The third is belief in the resurrection of the body. As we find it today in orthodox Christianity and Mohammedanism, that theory is an outgrowth of Jewish belief before the time of Christ; and it may properly be counted the great contribution of the Jews to solving the problem of the life beyond death. But at least four centuries before the Jews had evolved the doctrine it was known in Persia.

Until the conversion of Persia to Islam in the seventh and eighth centuries, the religion of the people for some fourteen hundred years had been Zoroastrianism, and Zoroastrianism teaches the resurrection of the body. In the earliest parts of its sacred book, the Avesta, which date from the sixth and seventh centuries before Christ, and through all the literature produced in later periods, we find resurrection a vital part of its creed. There is little doubt that Zoroaster himself taught it, and to this very day in the little group of his surviving followers in India (the Parsees) it remains an article of faith.

According to Persian belief, the soul is judged at the Cinvat Bridge three days after death and sent at once to heaven or hell. But bliss or torment is not the final state,



nor does the soul remain unbodied forever. At the close of twelve thousand years from the creation of the world, or three thousand years from the coming of Zoroaster, comes the end of the present age and the renewal of the world. At the appointed time Shaoshyant the Savior will appear and the dead will be raised. He is 'the author of the resurrection,' and at his call 'the dead shall rise up, life shall come back to the bodies, and they shall keep the breath.' The body of every man will arise in the place where he died, recreated from the original materials. The bones will come forth from the earth, the blood from the water, the hair from the plants, and the life from fire. All men, righteous and wicked, will assume again their bodies, and in that vast assembly men will know one another. And all their deeds, too, will be manifest. 'In that gathering a wicked man becomes as conspicuous as a white sheep among those which are black.' Then the good are set apart for heaven and the evil cast into hell for three days — there, for the first time, to suffer punishment in the body. On the fourth day there comes the final stupendous scene of the Renovation of the World. The mountains melt with fire and pour down like rivers, and into that stream of molten metal all men pass. For the righteous it is like walking in warm milk, but to the wicked it feels like liquid fire. Good and bad alike thus purified will meet together in great joy and converse in one language and praise the supreme God Ahura Mazda and all his angels and arch-angels. Then Shaoshyant will sacrifice an ox and prepare from its fat the mystic potion of immortality. When all have drunk of it, adults will find they are restored as men and women of forty and children as boys and girls of fifteen. Friend will recognize friend and each man will





have his own wife and children, though there will be no more begetting of offspring. Last of all Ahura Mazda will smite the arch-fiend Ahriman; hell will be consumed; and the new world of goodness triumphant and universal joy will last forever and ever.

The Persian scheme resembles the Jewish in so many respects, especially in the thought of our bodies living again, that many scholars have seen in Jewish doctrine a direct borrowing from Persian. That conclusion has been all the easier because the Zoroastrian belief is much older than the Hebrew and because the Jews were under Persian rule for some two hundred years before the time of Alexander. But the experts on whom we can most safely rely are inclined to think that the roots of the Jewish creed are to be found in the history of Israel itself, and that what came to the Jews from their neighbors was not a novel system to be bodily adopted but a stimulating and suggestive influence.

Broadly speaking, the Greek idea of the future life was the outcome of philosophic speculation about the nature of the soul, whereas the Hebrew idea was the result of experience of the nature of God. The Greeks based their hope on what they believed about the soul, the Hebrews on what they believed about God. In the Old Testament thought about Jehovah, then, we find the root of the resurrection doctrine.

From the earliest days of Moses, the God of the Jews had been known as a God who had chosen the people of Israel for his own. Thought of at first as merely a clan God, he remained, through all developments, a God who had a special covenant with the Jews and who had destined them for a glorious future. Furthermore, he had been known as a God of justice who demanded righteousness of



his people, who punished evil and rewarded good, and who was pledged to the triumph of his righteous cause. For a long period, however, his relation was with the *nation*, and with the individual only as a part of the nation; and therefore the promises of God, as interpreted by the great prophets — the champions of morality — applied to the whole people of Israel. Over and over again it was the nation that was punished for its sin, the nation that was rewarded for its virtue, and the nation whose splendid destiny was foretold. It was chiefly because these commands and promises of Jehovah referred to Israel as a whole and because his care and protection were offered to the nation, that the Jews were so little concerned with the fate of the individual after death. Their religious training and tradition had taught them to centre their thoughts and hopes not on the future of any man's soul but on the future of Israel. And so it was that with nobly advanced ideas about the nature of God they combined a primitive sort of belief in an underground Sheol where the forgotten dead prolonged a gloomy existence. It was only in the living group that God was vitally interested and only for its members that he had great things in store.

Since the Jews, then, were never given to philosophizing about the soul and since their intense religious faith, in its earlier form, gave them no ground to hope for a happy future for the soul, their thought on the subject of the life beyond death remained for long in a rudimentary state. But in the sixth and seventh centuries before Christ their belief began slowly to develop in two directions. The experience of repeated national disasters at the hands of mighty neighbors — especially the fall of Jerusalem in 586 and all the attendant misery — moved their religious



leaders to new thoughts. There grew up an interest in the individual never before known and at the same time a renewed emphasis on a Golden Age to come — a blissful future for an Israel restored.

The idea that God would treat each man separately on the basis of his own record appears as early as the prophet Ezekiel (sixth century before Christ). Expressing this thought of individual retribution, he writes, 'The soul that sinneth *it* shall die: the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father... the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon *him*, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon *him*.' And in the succeeding centuries, as national life began to decay under Persian domination and later under Greek, the emphasis on the individual and the growth of personal religion continued. But it never became a substitute for the national religion, nor did the Jews abandon their hope of national glory. Indeed, as the visible power of Israel waned, so much the more vivid became their pictures of a wonderful future in which God would intervene to free them from foreign masters and usher in an age of blessed prosperity. The more depressing their immediate fortunes, the more their eyes were turned to a coming day in which an almighty God must vindicate his people. In varied terms and in language that changed from age to age and from prophet to prophet, this Day was foretold. Always it meant a new order on earth, both moral and political; and so often was it associated with the coming of a Messiah that it is commonly known as the Messianic Age.

After maturing for many generations, these developing thoughts came to fruition in the second century before Christ, a time when the hopes of the Jewish nation seemed to touch bottom. Years of savage persecution at the hands



of their Syrian overlord Antiochus Epiphanes ended in a violent uprising led by the patriot Judas Maccabæus; and the outcome of a bloody struggle was a short-lived independence in which the Jewish theocracy was restored. It was in this troubled age, at the very close of the Old Testament period, that we find the first unmistakable records of belief in the resurrection of the body. That new faith solved so many problems that it won acceptance with surprising speed, and by the time of Jesus it was taken for granted by the vast majority and found a firm setting in the orthodoxy of Judaism.

It met the religious needs of the time by showing how God could keep all his promises, both to the individual and to the nation. Plainly enough, as Job and others had pointed out, the good are not always rewarded in this life and the evil not always punished. It would have been no remedy for the Jew to declare (as the Greeks had done) that in a future life in some other world the soul would reap rewards. For in the mind of the Jew a man consisted of soul *and* body, and he could be only half-alive when, as in Sheol, they were parted. More than that, salvation for the Jew meant salvation for the whole people. He could conceive no reward for himself apart from a redeemed nation in a new era of history on this earth. If he were to be truly saved and truly rewarded by an almighty God who had made a covenant with his race, he must share in the Golden Age to be. He must be able to stand up on his own feet in the coming Kingdom and answer to the roll-call of the righteous with a 'Present.' But how could this be possible for all the righteous Jews who had died long before the era of the Messiah? How could they be present? This baffling question was specially acute in the hard times of the Mac-



cabees when so many heroic Jews had suffered martyrdom and fallen in battle just in order that the kingdom might be restored to Israel. When their cause could finally be vindicated in the age to come and all they had labored for become real at last, was the mere accident of death to rob them of their recompense? And were only those who happened to be alive at the time to enjoy the glories of a reign which so many of the dead had died to achieve? From religious leaders whom the problem had long distressed came the answer, 'No! God will raise up the righteous dead.' Their souls will be restored to their bodies, and, with body and soul united once more, they will live as true men to have their part in the prosperity of the New Age.

This doctrine of 'the resurrection of the flesh' is set forth in a series of books which were written in the two centuries before the birth of Christ and in the first century thereafter. They are called 'Apocalypses' or 'Revelations,' for their aim is to reveal in mysterious symbols and allegories the future events which God is planning. Their content is mainly concerned with the coming Reign of God or the kingdom of His Messiah, and therefore with the overthrow of heathen enemies, the reward of the good, and the punishment of the wicked. By these strange apocalypses, with their dark language and their fiery prophecies, the Jews were cheered through generations of suffering and their hopes were centered on glorious events that awaited the pious people of God. There is little general knowledge of these books except among scholars, since nearly all of them belong between the Old and New Testaments and have never found a place in Jewish or Christian Bibles. But they demand a brief review because they record the great movement of popular thought to which the Jews were



indebted for their faith in the resurrection — a faith which they handed on to the Christian Church and which later found a place in the creed of Mohammed and his followers.

Among the few apocalypses in the Old Testament there are two in which we find a reference to the resurrection. The earlier appears in chapters 24 to 27 of Isaiah, a little apocalypse of the third or perhaps the second century before Christ, which has been inserted in that great composite book. In one of its verses (ch. 26, v. 19) the author cries, 'Thy dead shall live; my dead bodies shall arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust; for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast forth the dead.' These words are not easy to interpret, but they seem to promise to the righteous element in the nation an escape from Sheol and a risen life in God's kingdom. When we come to the book of Daniel, however, which was written afterward in the Maccabæan age (about 165 B.C.) there is a plain prophecy (ch. 12, v. 2) of individual resurrection. In the time when God shall triumph 'many of them that sleep in the dust shall awake, some to everlasting life and some to shame and everlasting contempt.' Here there is probably foretold a rising again of those who most deserve reward — the martyrs who died in the defence of their religion — and a bodily return of those who most deserve punishment — apostates and other Jews who persecuted the pious. Thus only certain classes of Jews are destined to rise.

Here, then, are the few traces our Old Testament has to offer of the resurrection faith in its earliest form. For the later growth we must turn, as we have said, to those apocalypses after Daniel which witness to the spread of the doctrine and which record the confusion of ideas that is



always to be expected in popular thought about the hereafter. In what may be called the Apocalyptic Period — let us say from 200 B.C. to A.D. 100 — there is a rich profusion of beliefs about the resurrection. No one attempted to straighten them into a system, and we can only view them as they stand, with an eye to the main points.

The most famous and important of the apocalypses is the Book of Enoch, a miscellaneous collection of literature dating, perhaps, from 170 B.C. to the middle of the first century. The work of various authors in three or four generations, it is an example of the shifting variety of popular belief. In some parts the resurrection is not mentioned, in others it is merely assumed, in still others it is definitely stated. In the earliest section it is implied that resurrection will precede the founding of an eternal Messianic Kingdom, but only the righteous in Israel will rise in the body, that they may 'live a long life on earth.' In a later portion of Enoch it is again the righteous who rise. 'The spirits of you who have died in righteousness will live, and will rejoice and be glad.' But here it seems to be not a rising again in the flesh but a restoration in some more spiritual form to share in a heavenly existence. Not until we reach the passages of latest date do we hear of a resurrection of all the Jews — pious and wicked alike — to a renewed life on earth. 'The earth will restore what has been committed to it, and Sheol what it has received,' and the righteous will be clothed in glorious bodies like the angels.

The same variety may be seen in other apocalypses. According to the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs (about 109 to 106 B.C.), there is to be a resurrection first of the Old Testament heroes and worthies and then of all the



righteous and wicked among the Jews. The pious will be restored to a life on earth in an ideal kingdom that will last forever. 'And those who died in grief will rise up in joy, and those in poverty for the Lord's sake will be enriched, and those in want will be fed full, and those in weakness will be made strong, and those who died for the Lord's sake will wake in life.' In the Psalms of Solomon (about 50 B.C.) we read that only the righteous will rise — 'they that fear the Lord will rise to eternal life'; but there is no definite mention of the revival of the body. Finally, in Second Esdras, a book of the latest period (about A.D. 81 to 96) we find a clear statement that *all* the dead arise — the only declaration in this literature of a universal bodily resurrection. 'And the earth shall restore those that are asleep in her, and so shall the dust those that dwell in silence, and the secret places shall deliver those souls that were committed unto them.'

The confusion which a reader will feel after studying the apocalypses, and even after scanning a brief review of them, is only a natural result of their own confusion of thought. To treat them in any simple and systematic style would be to falsify them, for they represent no dogmatic plan but the prolonged effort of devout and earnest men to feel their way in different directions toward solving the urgent problem of personal and national salvation. The thought of resurrection as the solution runs through all the books, but sometimes it is a resurrection of the flesh and sometimes apparently not; now it involves only the righteous Jews, and again it includes all the people of Israel, and even the dead of all races and ages. At times the thought which prompts the belief is that of an earthly kingdom to come; at other times it is an impending day of divine judgment.



The variety of opinion as to who shall rise at the resurrection and in what sort of body is due to the variety of apocalyptic thought about other questions. The time and type of resurrection had to be adjusted to the rest of the author's scheme, of which it was only a part. The earlier idea of an eternal and prosperous kingdom on earth particularly suggested that the bodies of all righteous Jews should first be revived, to share in its material glories. But the tendency of all this imaginative literature was to spiritualize the great events that God was planning and the scenery in which they would take place. And so the Messianic Kingdom became, in the plan of some writers, a temporary stage, to be followed by a final Judgment and a new heaven and earth. To suit this grandiose design, the resurrection would be postponed to the Day of Judgment and the bodies of the restored would be transformed to meet the ideal conditions of that future time. In other words, *when* a man rose and *how* he rose would depend on what he was rising *for*. With the passage of time, too, the scheme of the writers became more universal in scope, for if there were to be a Last Judgment it must include at least all the Jews, and, in the final view, the whole of mankind as well. And if men were to be judged and sentenced it could only be in the body. In some such way, by a process that is not easy to trace, the design of these seers evolved from the thought of a prosperous material kingdom for the Jewish nation, after God had punished their enemies, to the tremendous conception of a future day of reckoning for all men that should usher in the final era in a new heaven and a new earth miraculously remade. And with these prophecies, as they developed, the extent and nature of the bodily resurrection had always to keep pace. Yet through all the



centuries of changing belief runs the unchanging faith in a God almighty whose power is pledged to vindicate his own and to achieve the triumph of righteousness.

The apocalyptic literature, it is true, reflected ideas in religious circles outside the schools of the learned. But the doctrine of the resurrection of the body was adopted by the party of the Pharisees and became one of their distinguishing marks. And it was the Pharisees whose views prevailed. Their leaders, in the first centuries of the Christian era, gave final form to Jewish belief and settled the system which has ever since been orthodox.

‘The revivification of the dead,’ as the Jews called it, became a fundamental article of faith. It was one of the few to which an ‘anathema’ or curse was attached. ‘The following are those who have no portion in the world to come: whosoever says that the revivification of the dead is not proved from the Law, etc.’ Among pious scholars there was much difference of opinion as to detail, but on the main dogma all were agreed. The view was never discarded that the righteous in Israel will rise again at the beginning of the Messianic era; but at its close will come the general resurrection, the dread day when all men will stand in their bodies before the judgment seat of God. At the resurrection in the days of the Messiah — so certain rabbis taught — the dead in Palestine will rise first. In fact, it is only in Palestine that life can then be restored to dead bodies. All who had the misfortune to be buried elsewhere will have to creep through underground channels to the borders of the Holy Land, there to be reunited with their souls. Whenever bodies rise, whether to meet the Messiah or on the last great Day, they will rise with all the features and the deformities which were theirs in life. But



every defect will be wiped out by the merciful hand of God. Even the garments which once they had worn will clothe them; and dying rabbis, with this prospect in mind, would often give minute directions as to their apparel. Another curious opinion (later adopted by the Moslems) was that the resurrection body would be built up from one small bone at the end of the spine which was thought to survive all decay. What would be the nature of this risen body was a common subject of debate among the learned. The prevailing notion was crudely realistic; but in the minds of not a few there was room for the thought of a transfigured body, outwardly like that of earth but sexless and of radiant and heavenly substance.

Direct from Jewish orthodoxy comes the Christian faith in the resurrection, and from both alike is derived the teaching of Mohammed about the hereafter. In this sphere of the future, however, the Prophet of Islam was more indebted to Jews than to Christians; and before we enter the richer field of Christian doctrine, we may note in a few words how little Moslem thought has diverged from the parent stock.

In all Mohammed's teaching, as reliably revealed in the Koran, the idea of the Judgment Day is central, and for that Day the resurrection of all men is required. 'The day of resurrection' is a certainty to which he refers again and again. 'God, He is the truth, He quickens the dead, and He is mighty over all; and the Hour is coming, there is no doubt therein, for God raises up those who are in the tombs.' Like Jewish and Christian leaders before him, Mohammed encountered all the familiar objections to the doctrine that our bodies will rise. His favorite defence (like that of the Church Fathers) was an appeal to the



power of almighty God. If Allah, through the process of conception and birth, can create a man, it is no more of a marvel that he should recreate him from wasted and scattered bones. 'Man will say, "What! when I have died shall I then come forth alive?" Does not man then remember that we created him when he was naught?' Of the doubters who cry, 'What! When we are bones and rubbish, shall we then be raised up a new creation?' the Prophet says, 'He shall quicken them who produced them at first... God who created the heavens and the earth and was not weary with creating them, is able to quicken the dead! Nay, verily, He is mighty over all!' And, again like Christian apologists, Mohammed appeals to the analogy of springtime and its miraculous vegetation after winter. 'It is God who sends the winds, and they stir up a cloud, and we irrigate therewith a dead country, and we quicken therewith the earth after its death; so shall the resurrection be!'

In modern tradition and theology of a later time the resurrection is often described at length. Following the first blast of the trumpet of Judgment comes a period of forty days (or of forty years) in which God sends a heavy rain that covers the earth to the depth of twelve cubits and causes all the buried corpses to sprout forth like plants. Then all men will rise, perfect and whole, in bodies of true flesh and blood.

The orthodox Christian doctrine of the resurrection of the body was developed from the words of Jesus himself, from the disciples' experience of the resurrection of Jesus and their later accounts of it, and from the teaching of Saint Paul. Let us consider each of these early sources in turn.



Since both Jesus and Paul were first century Jews familiar with the thought of their time, we find an unbroken connection between Jewish and Christian doctrine. Jesus himself has very little to say about the resurrection. He takes it for granted and interprets it in line with the more enlightened ideas of his age. He speaks of 'the resurrection of the just' (Luke 14:14) and of 'rising from the dead' (Luke 16:31); and in one famous passage recorded in three of the Gospels we learn of his ideas about the nature of life after the resurrection.<sup>1</sup> 'On that day there came to him Sadducees, they that say that there is no resurrection; and they asked him saying, Teacher, Moses said, If a man die, having no children, his brother shall marry his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother. Now there were with us seven brethren: and the first married and deceased, and having no seed, left his wife unto his brother; in like manner the second also, and the third, unto the seventh. And after them all, the woman died. In the resurrection therefore whose wife shall she be of the seven? for they all had her.' Here we have a glimpse of three groups in contemporary thought on the subject: the Sadducees, a small party of the worldly-minded and well-to-do, who were more interested in politics than in religion and had no faith in the resurrection; the popular majority who took the resurrection very literally and whose crude ideas gave the Sadducees a chance to set their puzzle; and those of more spiritual mind among the Pharisees, with whom Jesus was here in sympathy. The answer of our Lord is clear and prompt: 'Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God. For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as angels in heaven.'

<sup>1</sup> Matthew 22: 23-33.



In his view the resurrection body was truly a body but not the same as earthly flesh and blood. It was of a transfigured type to which all need of sex was irrelevant. And then he proceeds to add, 'But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.' In other words, to put it in logical form, Jehovah is the God of Abraham; Jehovah is the God of the living; therefore Abraham is living. Here the Master falls back on the fundamental Jewish argument for the resurrection — that it is demanded by the character and promises of a God who will not desert his own and who will restore to life all who have faithfully served him. In all these comments Jesus was voicing the best thought of his time, so that we are not surprised to read that 'Certain of the scribes answering said, Teacher thou hast well said.'

But it was not what Jesus had to say about the resurrection which made that doctrine so vital in the Christian gospel. It was what his followers believed about the resurrection of Jesus himself. We are not here concerned to defend their faith or to prove what events were the cause of their experience, for our purpose is only to record their convictions and the effect of their message. And both are clear enough. They were profoundly convinced and joyfully preached that Christ had risen from the tomb and had appeared to them, and that his resurrection was the sure pledge of the resurrection of all believers. Hitherto the resurrection had been only the hope of a distant future; now it had actually happened to the Messiah of God. It had become an event in history, and mere speculation had

آزادی یابی  
 محمد حسن خاں



given place to a saving certainty. On that faith the Church was founded.

If we were tracing the rise and growth of the Church, the supreme value of the resurrection gospel would be the confidence it inspired that Christ was alive and active in the Christian community; but our aim is rather to follow the beliefs of men about the life after death. From that point of view the early Christian message is of decisive importance because it offered the rising of Jesus as a guarantee of the blessed future that awaited his followers and because, in the four Gospels, it passed on to succeeding ages a full account of what a resurrection is like. Since that story set the standard for all later doctrine, we need to recall its details.

According to the four evangelists, the return of Jesus from the dead was not the reappearance of his spirit. What John and Peter and the others saw, on more than one occasion, was not a ghost but a soul restored to a risen body. The tomb in which he had been laid was empty, and the body in which they beheld him was his own. In that body he could see and be seen, he could speak and sit at table and break bread. 'Behold my hands and my feet,' were his words, 'that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.' To doubting Thomas he said, 'Reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side'; and when 'they gave him a piece of a broiled fish... he took it and did eat before them.' And in the tenth chapter of the Acts we read of the witnesses 'who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead.' Here was no filmy copy of a mortal frame, and yet here was something not quite like the companion of former days. For he was not easily recognized; Mary did not know him



as he talked with her, until he spoke her name; and the disciples on the road to Emmaus were long in conversation with him before he joined them at supper 'and their eyes were opened.' He could suddenly enter a room through closed doors; he could vanish in an instant; and at the end 'he was taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight.'

With these experiences to remember and to hear, or in later ages to read about, Christians were not dependent for their ideas about the resurrection upon the shifting pictures of apocalypses or the debates of learned rabbis. They believed that they had full knowledge of the one resurrection that had ever taken place and knew in what form the risen Lord had manifested himself. There, indeed, was one supreme event to which they might turn not only for a pledge but for a standard. And to that model all later teaching has referred in its thought of the nature of a resurrection body: it is a true body, it is the same body that was laid to rest, yet plainly it is different — transmuted by a divine miracle.

In addition to the teaching of Jesus and the Gospel accounts of his resurrection, a third authority has moulded the popular belief of Christians and the doctrine of theologians — the epistles of Saint Paul. The resurrection was of central importance in the experience and the preaching of Paul; he wrote of it in many passages; and no later thinker has ever treated the subject without using his ideas. In fact, little of consequence has ever been added to what he had to say; and his influence has been so constant that we shall need to note his words in some detail. As in any teacher's view of the resurrection, the points to note are three: who rises, when do they rise, and with what bodies



do they rise? To all these questions Saint Paul has an answer.

Paul's idea of the resurrection is the product of his experience of the risen Christ and his conception of the Christian life. His conversion to the religion that he had once persecuted was the result of his conviction that Christ, in his risen and glorified body, had appeared to him. That was the beginning of a new life in which he became one with Christ. For Paul, therefore, the Christian life was a life in which the believer was mystically united with Christ so that Christ lived in him and he lived in Christ. By this union of the believer with his Savior, the Christian was able to share the life of Christ and at the last day to share in his resurrection. In other words, Christ lives in the Christian that the Christian may be what he was and do what he did — that the Christian may be 'conformed to his likeness.' And that indwelling power of Christ is the proof and pledge that even as he died and rose again, so shall the believer die and rise again. The resurrection is thus an achievement made possible by that likeness of the Christian to Christ which is so complete and transforming that it is a union of the Christian with Christ. It has begun here and now, and the future resurrection will simply be its natural outcome and continuance. To use Saint Paul's own words, 'If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwelleth in you, he that raised up Christ Jesus from the dead shall give life also to your mortal bodies through his Spirit that dwelleth in you.'

The resurrection, according to this view, is something that happens to a Christian because he is a Christian. For that reason Paul speaks only of the resurrection of righteous *believers*. In none of his letters does he ever refer to the



resurrection of the wicked or the resurrection of all men, and what he may have thought about their future state we can only guess. But since he shared the common belief in a final Judgment Day for all men, he must have assumed that the wicked would somehow appear to be judged.

As to the time of the resurrection the thought of Paul is clear. It will take place at the second coming of Christ — an event which he expected in the near future. 'They that are Christ's,' he writes, will rise 'at his coming.' 'For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.'

Far more difficult to interpret and far more interesting is the teaching of Saint Paul about the resurrection body. What are our bodies like when they rise? Or, as he put the question himself, 'With what manner of body do they come?' His own answer was given in the fifteenth chapter of the first Epistle to the Corinthians. Since that famous passage has been referred to in every later attempt to solve the problem, we must recall it here. 'But some one will say, How are the dead raised? and with what manner of body do they come? Thou foolish one, that which thou thyself sowest is not quickened except it die: and that which thou sowest, thou sowest not the body that shall be, but a bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other kind; but God giveth it a body even as it pleased him, and to each seed a body of its own. All flesh is not the same flesh; but there is one flesh of men, and another flesh of beasts, and another flesh of birds, and another of fishes. There are also



celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another... so also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. So also it is written, the first man Adam became a living soul. The last Adam [Christ] became a life-giving spirit. Howbeit that is not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; then that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is of heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, let us also bear the image of the heavenly. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I tell you a mystery: We all shall not sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. But when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.'

Every orthodox Christian thinker from the time of Saint Paul to the present day has declared that the resurrection body is the same as the earthly body and yet different. But each has tended to emphasize the one truth or the other — either to insist on the identity or to dwell upon the change.



Saint Paul is clearly of the latter group. His eloquent message to the church at Corinth is mainly concerned with the *contrast* between the body that was buried and the body that will rise. His eagerness to make so sharp a distinction may well have been prompted by his own experience of the risen Christ, for the body in which he believed he had seen the Lord was of a glorified and not of an earthly type. Paul was strongly affected, too, by the Greek thought of his time which regarded the body as a heavy impediment to the soul. Whatever may have been his reasons, however, his emphasis is plain. The body that is laid in the grave is described as flesh and blood, earthy, corruptible, weak, and mortal, while the body that will appear at the resurrection is called heavenly, incorruptible, and immortal, endowed with glory and power. It is as unlike the body we now bear as the grain of seed is unlike the full-grown wheat. For 'flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God.'

How necessary it is to lay stress upon the contrast, Saint Paul explains to his readers by reminding them how many kinds of bodies there are in God's creation, each one suited to the needs it was made to meet. Every seed, in the life of nature, has a body peculiar to itself, and even among the celestial bodies 'one star differeth from another star in glory.' So, in the resurrection, 'it is sown a natural [or animal] body; it is raised a spiritual body.' That is, our present mortal bodies are adapted to a natural environment, but after the resurrection our bodies will be adapted to a spiritual environment. In each case the soul is equipped with an organism that corresponds to its surroundings and its activities. 'For we know that if the earthly house of our bodily frame be dissolved, we have



a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal, in the heavens.'

But though Saint Paul may have felt the influence of that Greek philosophy which sought to rid the soul of its corruptible envelope, he was a thorough Jew at all essential points. For him, as for every prophet of his race, a man was composed of body as well as soul; and he gives no countenance to the thought of immortality for a disembodied spirit. The resurrection body may be different from the earthly body, but it is none the less a body, in which the living man shall appear for judgment. Like the Christ who was the first to be raised, the entire person of the Christian — an embodied soul — will rise to the new life. And not only will the soul be still embodied. In a sense that is not easy to define, the new body will be not only different from the old, but the same. The old has not been annihilated, to give place to a new creation. Between the two there is an organic connection, a real continuity. It is out of the fleshly, by a miracle of God, that the spiritual will grow, even as the full ear grows out of the seed. Through all the changes that are to be, some germ of bodily identity will be preserved. For Paul was surely thinking of change and not of substitution when he wrote, 'He that raised up Christ Jesus from the dead shall give life also to your mortal bodies,' and when he told the Philippians of 'the Lord Jesus Christ who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of his glory.'

From the time of Saint Paul, through nineteen centuries of Christian thought, the teaching of the Church about the resurrection has been extraordinarily constant. No doubt because the Bible itself was so explicit on the subject, the belief has never been disputed by the orthodox. Unlike



other doctrines, it was not one which evolved by a slow process in the course of controversy, nor was it one that divided the Eastern Church from the Western or the Catholic from the Protestant. With little change of form it may be found in all creeds in all periods, always denied or derided by unbelievers, but seldom, until the modern age, doubted by any Christian thinker of repute. The interest in tracing the doctrine through history is therefore not of the sort that is roused by watching a great idea grow. What interest there may be is afforded by noting the changing emphasis from thinker to thinker. For as we have discovered, some are concerned to dwell on the identity of the risen body with the mortal, and some to accent the glorious change which will take place on the Last Day.

The mass of evidence which the pages of theologians supply can be adapted to a slight sketch only by a selection out of many examples, to bring out the main theme and its few variations.

In that earliest of Christian symbols which we call the Apostles' Creed and which dates, in all essentials, from the last half of the second century, we find the phrase *carnis resurrectio* — the resurrection of the flesh. In that form, or in English as 'the resurrection of the body,' the clause is still recited in Christian churches, Catholic and Protestant. From the same period come the words of Tatian who says, 'We believe that there will be a resurrection of bodies after the consummation of all things.... Even though fire destroy all traces of my flesh, the world receives the vaporized matter; and though dispersed through rivers and seas, or torn in pieces by wild beasts, I am laid up in the storehouse of a wealthy Lord... God the sovereign, when He pleases, will restore to its pristine condition the substance



that is visible to Him alone.' The same thought appears in the work of his contemporary Athenagoras, who wrote a book on the resurrection. God, he declares, 'will unite and gather together again bodies that are dead or even entirely dissolved into their elements, so as to constitute the same persons.' Or, as Irenæus phrases it, 'Our bodies being... deposited in the earth and suffering decomposition there, shall rise at their appointed time, the Word of God granting them resurrection to the glory of God.'

A generation or so later we come upon another treatise on the resurrection, written by the famous Tertullian who states his positive views in lively Latin. 'The flesh,' he asserts, 'will rise again, and indeed whole, and indeed itself, and indeed unimpaired.' 'Assuredly it is nothing different that rises again from what was sown, and nothing else is sown than what is broken up in the ground, and nothing else is broken up in the ground but flesh.' Yet even with his heavy stress upon identity, Tertullian has room for the thought of change. 'The same flesh which was sown will spring up fruitfully, the very same, only fuller and more perfect, not another flesh, although it appears in another guise.' 'Having then become something else by its change, it will obtain the Kingdom of God, no longer the flesh and blood, but the body which God shall have given it,' for it 'will receive equipment and adornment.' But again he insists, 'While a thing is different, it can be the identical thing... So also at the occurrence of the resurrection it will be possible to be changed, altered, given a new shape, while the substance remains safe.'

A greater thinker, more appealing to the modern mind, was Origen, who wrote in Alexandria in the first half of the



third century. Greek in thought and speech, he is one of the few to dwell, in the manner of Paul, on the 'spiritual' character of the risen body. He concedes that our souls, in the life to come, must 'be invested with bodies' and even that our risen bodies will be 'no other than our own,' for 'it is out of the animal body that the very power and grace of the resurrection educe the spiritual body when it transmutes it from a condition of indignity to one of glory.' But that transformation is of immense significance. 'A change takes place in the qualities of the bodies' so that 'they will be of another sort, so to speak — different and better.' They will be 'fit to dwell in heaven,' 'like the bodies of angels, ethereal, and as it were glorious light.'

While theologians were writing for the learned and trying to interpret the resurrection in terms that should not be too crass and literal, the belief of the masses was always on the side of realism. Their ideas are reflected in some of the later Christian apocalypses that were popular in the second, third, and fourth centuries. In one of the earliest, the Apocalypse of Peter, we read, 'The wild beasts and the fowls shall God command to restore all the flesh that they have devoured, because He willeth that men should appear.' They must appear, that is, in the same bodies that had once been consumed. As the Apocalypse of Paul reminds the sinner, 'O wretched soul, look upon the flesh whence thou art come out; for thou must needs return into thy flesh at the day of resurrection to receive the due rewards of thy sins.' But the Apocalypse of Thomas declares that though 'everyone shall go unto his own body, where it is laid up,' 'their bodies will be changed into the image and likeness and the honor of the holy angels.... Then shall they be clothed with the vesture of life eternal.'



Among the many writers of the fourth century, Gregory of Nyssa in the Eastern Church and Hilary of Poitiers in the West show little difference in their doctrine. It is the former who says, 'We assert that the same body again as before, composed of the same atoms, is compacted around the soul,' and 'you will behold this bodily envelopment, which is now dissolved in death, woven again out of the same elements, not indeed into *this* organism with its gross and heavy texture, but with the threads worked up into something more subtle and ethereal... restored to you with a brighter and more entrancing beauty.' And according to Hilary, 'God will fashion anew the broken fragments, not out of some different stuff, but out of the identical stuff of their origin, imparting a form of beauty well pleasing to Himself.... For it will not rise another body, though it will rise to other conditions.' A little later the great Jerome is a forceful witness in favor of a literal resurrection. In his view 'the reality of a resurrection without flesh and bones, without blood and members, is unintelligible.' And more than that, 'there must of necessity be diversity of sex.' Indeed, 'if the woman shall not rise again as a woman nor the man as a man, there will be no resurrection of the dead. For the body is made up of sex and members.' Yet even Jerome is equally confident that the flesh will be 'glorious.'

Far more influential than Jerome, as a theologian, was his famous contemporary Augustine whose treatment of the resurrection (as of so many other doctrines) has served to guide nearly all thinkers who came after him. Augustine affirms that the resurrection of the dead 'is the special faith of Christians; this alone is the faith which divides off ... Christians from all men.' And with great fullness he



expounds its meaning. He is convinced, to begin with, 'that the soul cannot exist in absolute separation from a body of some kind,' which is proved 'by the fact that to exist without body belongs to God alone.' Furthermore, this body that shall be ours will be the same body that clothed us in this life. 'The earthly material out of which men's mortal bodies are created never perishes; but though it may crumble into dust and ashes, or be dissolved into vapors and exhalations, though it may be transformed into the substance of other bodies, or dispersed into the elements, though it should become food for beasts and men, and be changed into their flesh, it returns in a moment of time to that human soul which animated it at first.' Or, as he puts it elsewhere, 'in the resurrection the *substance* of our bodies, however disintegrated, shall be entirely reunited,' for 'the bosom of this earth, so vast, shall restore entire and perfect to the future resurrection all those elements of human bodies which it is now receiving when they are dissolved.' In the risen bodies there will still remain the distinction of sex, though 'adapted not to the old uses but to a new beauty,' and they will be capable of taking food, yet in no way dependent on nourishment. Despite all the elements of likeness, however, the change will be amazing in its completeness. In the universal conflagration of the Last Judgment 'the qualities of the corruptible elements which suited our corruptible bodies shall utterly perish, and our substance shall receive such qualities as shall, by a wonderful transmutation, harmonize with our immortal bodies.' Every man shall appear as he was in youth with all blemishes erased, invested with a body of new beauty, endowed with the power to be wherever his spirit wills. 'We shall have bodies of such a sort that where we wish to



be and when we wish it, we are there,' for 'flesh and blood shall be transformed, and shall become a body heavenly and angelical.' But none the less 'they will be bodies and not spirits'; even 'as now the body is called "animate," though it is a body and not a soul, so then the body shall be called "spiritual," though it shall be a body, not a spirit.' Finally, 'as to the manner in which this shall take place we can now only feebly conjecture, and shall understand it only when it comes to pass.'

After the days of Augustine, nothing of value was said about the resurrection for more than eight hundred years. In the thirteenth century, however, Saint Thomas Aquinas produced the monumental theology which has long since become the standard of the Roman Church. And Aquinas has much to say about the resurrection. Indeed, he is certain about more details than any other writer on the subject. From his pages we learn that when the Day of Judgment suddenly arrives, all men will rise again. And 'we cannot call it a resurrection unless the soul returns to the same body.' 'The matter that will be brought back to restore the human body will be the same as that body's previous matter... the self-same body will rise again, since the self-same matter is resumed.' All the members now in man's body will be restored, including the entrails, hair, nails, and blood, but there will be no need or desire to eat, sleep, or beget. For the resurrection bodies will be wonderfully endowed with qualities and powers unknown before. The bodies of all men will be incorruptible and immortal, and the bodies of the blessed will enjoy yet other gifts — immunity to pain, the power to move at will with incredible speed and an aspect of radiant glory.

In all later catechisms of the Roman Catholic Church



the teaching of Saint Thomas is repeated and approved. It differs in no essential point from the orthodox creed of the Greek Church which affirms that 'every soul will return to its own body,' but this body 'will then be incorruptible and immortal at its resurrection.' Even the Protestant Confessions of the Reformation period retain the same dogma, for in that field there was no quarrel with Rome. John Knox declared in the Scottish Confession of Faith (1560) that 'in the general Judgment there shall be given to every man and woman resurrection of the flesh; for the sea shall give up her dead; the earth them that therein be enclosed; yea, the Eternal our God shall stretch out His hand on the dust, and the dead shall rise incorruptible, and that in the self-same flesh that every man now bears, to receive according to their works glory and punishment.' The Belgic Confession of the Dutch Reformed Church includes these words: 'All the dead shall be raised up out of the earth, and their souls joined and united with their proper bodies in which they formerly lived.' And the Westminster Confession of the Presbyterians, set forth in 1647 and still the standard of their Church, asserts that 'at the last Day... all the dead shall be raised up with the self-same bodies and none other, although with different qualities, which shall be united with their souls forever.'

We have been so fully concerned with the manner of the resurrection that we have had little to say about the reasons for it. Yet Christian thinkers have often met with doubt in believers and with denial by unbelievers; and, when on the defensive, they have had to explain how the resurrection is possible and why it is necessary. The real reason, of course, why the dogma has been generally ac-



cepted is that it is plainly declared in the New Testament and has been universally taught by the Church. But an appeal to authority is not always convincing to the sceptic, and better arguments were therefore presented. Two of these were in frequent use. In agreement with Jewish thought it was constantly asserted that a man is composed of soul *and* body; he cannot be a true personality if either is lacking. According to Athenagoras — to take an early example — the resurrection is implied in man's original nature. A complete man is made up of body and soul, and if only the soul rises, he is imperfect. Otherwise, says our philosopher, we should have to infer that God made a mistake in creating man of these two elements. Or, to use the words of Methodius, Bishop of Olympus in the fourth century, 'Man consists of soul and body; man therefore will not exist without a body, lest haply he should become another being than man.' The thought is repeated twelve centuries later in the Roman Catechism of the Council of Trent which teaches that 'so long as the soul is separated from the body men cannot attain the perfect consummation of their felicity, replete with every good.... The soul which is not joined to the body must be imperfect.'

The other favorite argument is an extension of the same idea. It is well stated by Athenagoras who points out that if the Last Judgment is to be just, it must be on the composite being who did the acts that are to be judged. Soul and body together committed the acts and together they must be rewarded or punished. As Tertullian wrote, 'It will be impossible to pass sentence except on the body for what has been done in the body. God would be unjust if anyone were not punished or else rewarded in that very condition wherein the merit itself was achieved.' Ambrose,



too, is one of many others to insist that 'it is necessary that the body whose actions are weighed, should rise again. For how shall the soul be summoned to judgment without the body, when account has to be rendered of the companionship of itself and the body?' And if we pass from the fourth to the twentieth century, we can read in a Catechism of Pius X that 'God wishes the resurrection of the body in order that the soul, having done good or evil when united with the body, may now, together with it, receive reward or punishment.' Or if we turn to a recent textbook by a professor in an Episcopal seminary, we are met by the same argument: 'Justice seems to require that a man shall be judged and punished or rewarded in the selfsame body in which he has done the things of which he is to reap the consequences.'

As to how so great a miracle as the resurrection could come to pass theologians have been hard pressed for an answer. They could not fail to be aware that a simultaneous rising from the earth of all the former bodies of all the departed was an event difficult to imagine and certain to seem unlikely and even absurd to human reason unconvinced by authority. The early Fathers of the Church encountered the familiar objections among the Greeks, Mohammed found them among the Meccans, the medieval Church knew them among heretics, and modern orthodoxy in a scientific age has had to combat them at every turn. For Catholics, Protestants, and Moslems alike the final answer has always been an appeal to the invincible power of God. 'With God nothing is impossible.' If He could create the body from dust in the first place, He can recreate it from dust at the Last Day. Tertullian speaks for all defenders of the traditional faith when he says, 'As-



surely He who made is able to remake; just as it is much more to make than to remake, so also the restoration of flesh is easier than its creation.'

We have already quoted more than enough of what the doctors of the Church have had to say in all the periods of Christian history. We need add no more of the same sort to bring our survey up to date, for all that the strictly orthodox have written in the last two hundred years is only an echo of familiar doctrine. But orthodoxy is not as strict as it once was; and for the past two generations the dogma of the resurrection has been interpreted with increasing freedom by Christian thinkers of respectable standing. We should end our review by leaving a false impression if we implied that the only choice today was between a rigid tradition and a flat denial, for between the two there are now many interesting shades of opinion. According to the position of the judge, some are permissible within the Church and some are not; but they are all examples of the same type. The few Moslem modernists who have as yet appeared are not concerned to treat of the resurrection; the Roman Church remains immune to winds of new doctrine; and modern reformed Judaism in America has frankly rejected the resurrection of the body and insists only on the immortality of the soul. The field of debate is therefore within the Protestant fold, where variety prevails.

The present tendency is to retain the essential value of the resurrection doctrine while discarding its orthodox form. Why, ask the writers of the newer school, have Christians clung so long to the belief that their bodies would some day rise? Because their faith demanded that the personality of each man should be preserved after

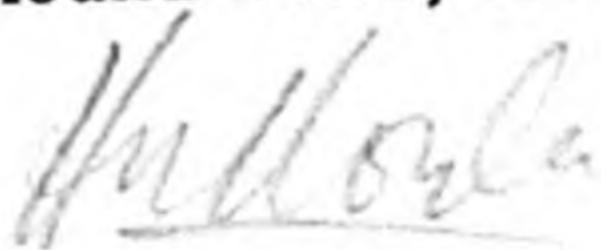


death, whole and undiminished; and they found no other way to conceive that complete survival than through a physical resurrection. That solution had been handed to them from Jews who once looked for an earthly future, but it was accepted and retained as the one available resource. Like Jerome they have all insisted on the restoration of the flesh, for only so, as he said, 'will Paul still be Paul and Mary still be Mary.' It is possible, however, to believe that the personality will survive without believing that the grave will give up its contents. On that point all modern liberals are agreed. Denying in the strict sense the resurrection of the flesh, they hold to the persistence of personal identity.

But they differ, in varying degrees, when it comes to the question of a body for the soul. A soul wholly disembodied — pure spirit or intellect — was the ideal of the Greek philosopher; but it makes little appeal to the Christian of today, for it is a purely metaphysical concept impossible to imagine; it offers no provision for a future in which the emotions and the will are thought to play a part; and it affords no prospect of moral and social life in the next world. If the individual is to remain an individual, in fruitful contact with other personalities, he must have something that corresponds to his present body. All that we can safely assert is that it will be a different kind of body suited to a different environment — a new medium through which the soul can find expression in the new life that awaits it. Only so can that life be as rich in values as the life that we know here. The more conservative thinkers still try to claim connection between the future body and the present body, even if the tie be slender indeed. But according to the more radical view, there is no advantage



whatever in linking the two. They are not of the same material; the only continuity between them is supplied by the soul itself. If the soul, then, is to have no further use for its earthly frame, it need not wait till the Judgment Day for its new organism. It is at death that the spirit receives 'that body that shall be.' The whole apparatus of the resurrection and the Last Judgment is thus abandoned. No longer is there imagined an interval of thousands or millions of years in which disembodied souls await the final trumpet. The entire program bequeathed to the Church by Jewish apocalyptic is frankly rejected, and in place of the resurrection of the flesh we have the immortality of an embodied soul. This newer doctrine, now freely taught in schools of the liberal Protestant type, is clearly at odds with nineteen hundred years of orthodoxy. Yet it finds no little encouragement in the words of Saint Paul; it is in tune with the thought of the day; and it may prove to be, for the Church of tomorrow, the form in which the essence of an ancient faith may be found worthy to survive.





## CHAPTER XVIII

### JUDGMENT AFTER DEATH

THOUGH the belief in some kind of judgment after death is familiar among many uncivilized peoples, it is seldom a moral judgment. Even races of higher culture, so long as they remain at the level of nature religion, have rarely (as in Egypt) achieved the idea of an ethical ordeal. But adherents of any religion which is mainly concerned with salvation have had need in their faith for a moral judgment of the departed. Only by such a critical test can the saved be sorted out from the lost.

In Hinduism the terrible judge of the dead is the god Yama. His watchful messengers lay hold upon the soul of the deceased and drag him to the tribunal. There Yama sits with his chief attendants, at his right hand the record-keeper Chitra-Gupta, in whose rolls are set down all the man's deeds, both good and evil. These are weighed in the balances and the verdict announced by Yama in the sentence of punishment or reward. But in that dread presence a devotee of any one of the savior-gods need have no fear, for his scriptures have taught him that he will be saved by his faith and his pious observances. As Yama asserts in the Vishnu Purana, 'Brahma appointed me to act as judge over the deeds of man, but the worshippers of Vishnu are absolutely free from my control.' 'Remember,' he adds, 'that you do not touch any of the worshippers of Vishnu.'

In the Orphic mysteries, too, a solemn trial awaited the



soul at death. The details of that ceremony are familiar to readers of the Dialogues of Plato, for Plato found in the lore of the mysteries many of his pictures of the life to come. 'After death,' he tells us in the *Phædo*, 'the genius of each individual, to whom he belonged in life, leads him to a certain place in which the dead are gathered together, whence after judgment they must go into the world below, following the guide.... When the dead arrive at the place to which the genius of each severally conveys them, first of all they have sentence passed upon them, as they have lived well and piously or not.' The judges who then view the naked soul are three — Æacus, Minos, and Rhadamanthus — that same Rhadamanthus of whom Virgil wrote, 'He holds his sway severe; he hears and punishes each secret fraud, forcing confession from the souls who once, rejoicing in their self-deceiving guilt, put off the atonement to the hour of death.' When the verdict has been given, the good leave the court by the heavenly way that leads toward the right, to enjoy the peace of Elysium; the evil pass down toward the left, to suffer the pains of Tartarus.

The Persian religion of Zoroastrianism is so deeply concerned with morality and moral issues that a judgment at death is inevitable in its scheme of the hereafter. According to the teaching of its sacred books, the soul hovers near the body for three days and nights, full of memories of its good or evil deeds. At the dawn of the fourth day the righteous spirit is met by a lovely maiden who suddenly appears with a breath of fragrant breeze, while the wicked soul is greeted by a hideous hag who arrives with the chill of a foul blast, heavy with sickening stench. Each by his conscience so personified is led before the judgment seat on



Mount Alburz. There he is confronted by three divine judges — Mithra, Sraosha, and Rashnu. Rashnu it is who holds in his hands the delicate balances in which the deeds of every man are weighed without the shadow of favor to any. 'It is said in revelation that if such be the quantity of sin that the sin is one filament of the hair of the eyelashes more in weight than the good works are, that person arrives in hell. And if such a quantity of good works be in excess, he arrives righteous in the radiant locality of heaven.' To one abode or the other he is sent, there to abide for thousands of years until the day of the Renovation of the World. Then comes the general resurrection that we have described, and the Last Judgment. In the Persian faith, however, as in the Jewish and Christian, this Universal Judgment, though last in time, was the first to be believed in. The individual judgment at death was a later development, to provide the soul with a fit dwelling-place for the long period that must intervene.

In Jewish thought there is no formal judgment at death like that which may be found in Hindu, Greek, and Persian doctrine. When the idea of a divine judgment for the dead arises, the ordeal is placed at the end of the present age in connection with the miraculous events of future history. It is part of that general scheme which includes a resurrection and the coming of the Messianic Kingdom; and since all these beliefs, as we have seen, were in process of change for several centuries, the teaching about the Last Judgment long remained in a similar state of confusion. In some of the earlier apocalypses which reveal the days to come the Final Judgment is put at the beginning of the Messiah's eternal earthly kingdom, and its chief purpose is to condemn apostate Jews and the Gentile



oppressors of Israel. But in later books of revelation, which view the Kingdom as a temporary stage, there is proclaimed a first judgment before the Kingdom appears and a Final Judgment at its close. By the end of the first century of our era, however, the doctrine had found its ultimate form, and with little variation has since been part of Jewish orthodoxy.

According to the plan accepted, there will one day be a great crisis in history when the Messiah will appear. Just before his Golden Age begins, the enemies of Israel will be defeated and all living sinners among the Jews will be exterminated by sword and pestilence. Then, in a world so purged, will follow the blessed reign of God's Anointed, to last for many generations — perhaps for four hundred years, perhaps for a thousand. In the picture of this prosperous millennium the Old Testament ideal of national judgment and national salvation found its consummation. But that ideal was not high enough to satisfy a later age which had come to demand a judgment for each man and for all men. And so there was declared to be a universal Last Judgment at the end of the Messianic Age. At that hour all the dead of all the generations will rise from their graves and appear before the throne of God, the Supreme Judge. With the aid of the Recording Angel and his book Jehovah will judge every man, soul and body together, according to his own deeds. The righteous will live forever in a blessed Paradise and the wicked will be condemned to the pains of Gehenna.<sup>24</sup>

Jesus' idea of the Kingdom of God was expressed in moral terms, and for him the rôle of the Messiah was not that of an earthly king. Yet he looked for judgment at the coming of God's Anointed. The Messiah himself will be



the Judge at the day of his appearing, and the Great Assize will be for all men. That Day he foretells in such warning words as these: 'It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you,' and 'every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.' The Gospel of Matthew attributes to him a prophecy of the ominous signs that will precede the Advent. There will be wars and rumors of wars; 'for nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places.' 'Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.' And in another famous passage the Judgment itself is described: 'But when the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the angels with him, then shall he sit on the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all the nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as the shepherd separateth the sheep from the goats; and he shall set the sheep on his right hand but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.... Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into the



eternal fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels. ... And these shall go away into eternal punishment: but the righteous into eternal life.'

So clear and vivid a picture of the Last Day, enshrined as it was in the Gospel story, could not fail to set the standard for all future teaching in the Church. In every branch of Christianity the dogma of the Last Judgment serves only to repeat and to interpret this classical utterance. The doctrine was further supported by other passages in the New Testament. The Book of Revelation tells us of the Day when God shall sit on the 'great white throne' and all the risen dead shall stand before him. 'And the books were opened... and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.' And those whose names were not inscribed in the Book of Life were cast into the lake of fire.

In the earlier letters of Paul, too, there is frequent reference to the Last Judgment. 'We must all be made manifest,' he writes, 'before the judgment seat of Christ; that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or bad.' It will be 'the day when God shall judge the secrets of men,' 'the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who will render to every man according to his works.' Either Christ or God Himself is named as the Judge and the great Day is to be at the second coming of Christ. That return to earth of the glorified Lord is to be the signal for the general resurrection and the general judgment. In New Testament times it was commonly expected at any moment, and from that day to this there have always been groups of Christians who thought they knew that it was coming very soon. But though the doc-



trine of the Church abandoned the hope of a speedy return, it has always asserted that some day the Christ would come back to earth in glory. And this 'Day of the Lord,' once thought to be so imminent, will mark the hour of resurrection and the Final Judgment of all mankind. As the Christian Hippolytus warned his hearers in the third century, 'It is not Minos and Rhadamanthus that are to judge the world, as ye fancy, O Greeks, but He whom God the Father has glorified.' And two hundred years later Augustine declares, 'That, therefore, which the whole Church of the true God holds and professes as its creed, that Christ shall come from heaven to judge quick and dead, this we call the last day, or last time, of the divine judgment.' In much fuller detail we find the same doctrine in the great system of Saint Thomas Aquinas, who believes that the Judgment will probably take place at Mount Olivet where Christ ascended to heaven. Too much time would be needed, he thinks, for the trial to be conducted by word of mouth; it will occur in one brief day by a purely mental process that will reveal to all men their own and others' deeds.

The terrifying prospect of this future ordeal was not confined to the imagination of theologians. In sermons and hymns it was burned into the consciousness of the masses through all the Middle Ages, so that Christ became for many the dread Judge whose coming was to be feared at that

... Judgment Day

Just after the first sounding of the trump  
When all earth seethes and crumbles with the slow  
Vast, mouldy resurrection of the dead.

A famous Latin hymn of the thirteenth century paints the scene in orthodox colors:



Day of wrath! O day of mourning!  
See fulfilled the prophets' warning,  
Heaven and earth in ashes burning!

O what fear man's bosom rendeth,  
When from heaven the Judge descendeth,  
On whose sentence all dependeth!

Wondrous sound the trumpet flingeth;  
Through earth's sepulchres it ringeth;  
All before the throne it bringeth.

Death is struck, and nature quaking,  
All creation is awaking,  
To its Judge an answer making.

Lo! the book, exactly worded,  
Wherein all hath been recorded:  
Whence shall judgment be awarded.

When the Judge his seat attaineth,  
And each hidden deed arraigneth,  
Nothing unavenged remaineth.

Worthless are my prayers and sighing,  
Yet, good Lord, in grace complying,  
Rescue me from fires undying!

With thy favored sheep O place me;  
Nor among the goats abase me;  
But to thy right hand upraise me.

While the wicked are confounded,  
Doomed to flames of woe unbounded,  
Call me with thy saints surrounded....

But Protestant pictures of the Judgment Day have been equally definite and no less lurid. The dogma was accepted by all the Churches of the Reformation; and in eighteenth century New England Jonathan Edwards could move his hearers to repentance by warning them that 'Christ Jesus will, in a most magnificent manner,



descend from heaven with all the holy angels.... He will descend thus into our air, to such a distance from the surface of the earth that everyone shall see him.' Then terror and amazement will possess the condemned. 'How will all their faces look pale! How will death sit upon their countenances! What dolorous cries, shrieks, and groans! What trembling and wringing of hands, and gnashing of teeth will there then be!'

So far as the Last Judgment goes, there is little to choose between Jonathan Edwards and Mohammed. To sinners in seventh century Arabia the Prophet foretold the Day

When the sun is folded up,  
 And when the stars do fall,  
 And when the mountains are moved,  
 And when the she-camels ten months  
     gone with young shall be neglected,  
 And when the beasts shall be crowded together,  
 And when the seas shall surge up,  
 And when souls shall be paired with bodies.  
 . . . . .  
 And when the pages shall be spread out,  
 And when the heaven shall be flayed,  
 And when hell shall be set ablaze,  
 And when Paradise shall be brought nigh,  
 The soul shall know what it has produced!

In the words of Allah Himself it will be 'The day when we will move the mountains, and thou shalt see the whole earth stalking forth; and we will gather them [mankind] and will not leave them behind. Then shall they be presented to the Lord in ranks.... And the Book shall be placed, and thou shalt see the sinners in fear of what is in it; and they will say, "Alas for us! what ails this Book, it leaves neither small nor great things alone, without numbering them"... and they shall find present what they have



done; and thy Lord will not wrong anyone.' It is 'the day that approaches, when hearts are choking in the gullets,' when 'the voices shall be hushed before the Merciful, and thou shalt hear naught but a shuffling,' 'a day of gathering, there is no doubt therein: — a part in Paradise and a part in the blaze.'

Such lively images of an impending Day of Doom are abundant in the Koran. And since that sacred book has always been trusted as an infallible guide, the orthodox dogma of Islam has made much of the Last Judgment. Among the signs which foretell its coming will be tumults and seditions, great distress in the world, the decay of faith, the coming of the false anti-Christ, and the descent of Jesus to Damascus, to initiate an era of plenty and peace — a curious vestige of Jewish Messianic hope. Before the final day there will appear a greater figure — the Mahdi, the Moslem Messiah — who will fill the earth with righteousness. And at the end comes the first call of the Trumpet, 'and all who are in the heavens and the earth shall be startled... and all shall come abjectly to Him.' Then, after a space of forty years, will sound the second blast of the Trumpet, the signal for the resurrection when all men shall assemble at the judgment seat. God Himself will come in the clouds to act as Judge, with Mohammed as intercessor. The recording angels will produce their books, and Gabriel will hold the balances to weigh the good deeds against the evil. 'And no soul shall be wronged at all,' is the warning word of Allah, 'even though it be the weight of a grain of mustard seed, we will bring it up; for we are good enough at reckoning.'

In the earliest days of the Christian Church when nearly all believers looked for a return of their Lord within a brief

A remark by a Hindu  
as is evident -



time, no need was felt for any judgment of the dead save that which was to happen at his coming. But when the advent never took place and its date was postponed to an indefinite future, the demand arose for some kind of testing of the departed by which they might be assigned to heaven or hell in the meantime. For the dead could hardly be left for uncounted ages without sentence or destination. They had to go somewhere; and the process by which they were consigned to one fate or the other must surely be a process of judgment. So the Catholic Church developed the doctrine that at the death of each man there is a 'particular judgment' of God upon him alone. Yet, though the verdict decided the fate of the soul forever, tradition demanded that the 'General Judgment' at the end of the world should still be retained. The same two judgments are likewise familiar in Protestant and in Moslem teaching.

Just as the modern age has wrought no change of belief about the resurrection in the Roman Church or in Islam, so it has never modified the Catholic or the Moslem dogma of the Last Judgment. Even in Protestant bodies there has been little growth of opinion except in liberal circles where tradition is no bar to the use of critical reason. In the modernist group, however, the Judgment Day has met with the same fate as the resurrection of the flesh — and quite rightly, for each is the complement of the other and both stand or fall together.

Just as the typical Jew, who always thought in terms of history, could only imagine the survival of personality as the raising of bodies to live on a transformed earth, so he could only imagine the ultimate triumph of righteousness and the vindication of God's power and purpose as a definite day of crisis in future history. His race has therefore



bequeathed to the Christian Church and to Islam the grandiose scheme of a General Resurrection and a General Judgment at an unknown hour to come; and only the more radical within the Christian fold have so far been prepared to deny both. But the liberal theologian, when he eliminates the interval between death and the resurrection, eliminates also the interval between death and judgment. In his view the day of death is the day of judgment; for him the only judgment is 'the particular judgment' — not a formal act, but a process internal and automatic, deciding for each soul its fate after death. He declines to allow the claim of tradition that after thousands or millions of years, souls already judged and long since assigned to regions of happiness or pain, will suddenly be restored to their bodies and judged all over again with results exactly identical.

In the mind of the modern thinker, then, the second coming of Christ is not a visible event in an aerial setting but an invisible and unending process by which the living Lord wins ever increasing power over the lives of men. And the Judgment of Christ is not the awesome scene that Michelangelo could paint, but a continuous testing and sifting of men's souls — here and hereafter — carried out in the temper and spirit of Christ, with Christ himself as the standard and ideal.

Readers:—  
This is an philosophy  
both of the present and so is a  
of the future. The  
have been philosophy  
as their subject.  
J.M.



*Thank you*

## CHAPTER XIX

### DISTINCTIONS IN THE AFTER-LIFE: THE STANDARDS OF JUDGMENT

IN THE field of rudimentary beliefs, as we have seen, the distinctions among departed spirits are seldom moral distinctions and rarely take the form of rewards and punishments. But wherever the influence of the higher religions has prevailed the future lot of the deceased is thought to be dependent on their conduct in this life. The decision as to their fate may be the result of a formal judgment in accordance with the ethical demands of a personal God, as in Zoroastrianism, Christianity, and Islam; or it may be due to the silent working of an inevitable law, as in the karma doctrine of India. In either case the good and the bad are sorted out and pass at death to reward or punishment. Their retribution may take the form of varied rebirths or of assignment to some heaven or hell. What transmigration means in India and elsewhere we have already considered, and the character and complexion of hell and heaven we shall later examine. Meantime, however, it will be interesting to note the standards of judgment that determine the destiny of the soul. Such a review is more nearly appropriate to a history of human morals than to a study of the life beyond death; but even if we attempt no more than a slight sketch, it may prove easier to understand the ethical value of heaven and hell.

In any survey of this kind it soon appears that the tests which men apply in the process of judging are of two sorts. One is concerned with ordinary current morality, and on



this level all religions are very much alike. The other is concerned with religious or ritual matters — a field in which there are characteristic differences. In the law-books of Indian religion, for example, the virtues and vices that deserve rewards and penalties beyond the grave are often of the obvious type that would suggest the same treatment in any other religion. Truthfulness, fidelity, generosity, and kindness are numbered among the virtues, and among the vices are included stealing, adultery, murder, slander, and avarice. According to the Vishnu Purana, a man who neglects a poor and friendless stranger goes to hell, but he who honors him as a guest 'for one night obtains earthly happiness, a second night gains the middle air, a third heavenly bliss, and many nights procure endless worlds.' Almsgiving, too, confers merit, for, as the Laws of Manu declare, 'For whatever purpose a man bestows any gift, for that purpose he receives in his next birth with due honor its reward.' Truth is no less sure in its results. 'Truth,' says the law-book of Narada, 'is the ladder by which man ascends to heaven.' And as other texts remind us, wisely devotion is certain of recompense. 'To pay obedience to her lord is the only means for a woman to obtain bliss in heaven' and 'those women who strive to do what is agreeable to their husbands will go to heaven.' In the great Indian epic, the Mahabharata, to die in a righteous war is declared 'an open door to heaven'; but 'the truthful, the self-restrained, the generous, and those who are charitable in thought and speech are also there.' Equally plain is the verdict for the wicked. In words from the Institutes of Vishnu, 'This is the threefold path to hell: carnal desire, wrath, and greed; therefore must a man shun those three vices.'



But as we had occasion to notice in studying the doctrine of transmigration, the sacred books of India are so largely the work of priestly authors that they make little distinction between ritual duties and moral duties. And the Brahmans were so interested in protecting their own privileges that they treat caste observances and ethical obligations in much the same style. Gifts to the priests are declared to bring eternal happiness and denial of them hell. 'One should give, according to one's ability, wealth to Brahmans learned in the Veda... thus one obtains after death heavenly bliss.' In fact any one of the faithful who gives a pregnant cow to a Brahman 'enters heaven for as many ages of the world as that cow and her calf together have hairs on their bodies'! Needless to say assault upon a Brahman is the deadliest sin. 'No greater crime is known on earth,' says Manu, 'than slaying a Brahman; a king, therefore, must not even conceive in his mind the thought of killing a Brahman.' One who has merely threatened a Brahman with intent to do him bodily harm will wander for a hundred years in one of the hells, and if he has struck him in anger even with a blade of grass, he will have twenty-one undesirable rebirths. But if he has actually shed the priestly blood, he will be devoured by animals in the next world for as many years as there were particles of dust in the blood-soaked ground. Those who have been killed in protecting a Brahman, however, go straight to heaven.

Yet it is only fair to add that the duties of Brahmans are not always forgotten in the zeal to maintain their rights. Priests who drink intoxicating liquors are destined to lowly rebirths. Even 'by bargaining the priests are deprived of their peace in heaven,' and 'a Brahman who neither per-



forms austerities nor studies the Veda, but delights in accepting gifts, sinks with the donor into hell.'

The rules of caste are no less sacred than the moral law, for morality in India has long been conditioned by the caste system. It is therefore declared that whoever explains the laws and rites of the sacred books to low-caste Sudras will sink into hell; a high-caste man who dies after eating with a Sudra 'becomes a village pig or he is born again into that Sudra's family'; and a Brahman who takes a Sudra wife is condemned to future torment. It is even dangerous to break the law of precedence in marriage, for 'the elder brother who marries after the younger, the younger brother who marries before the elder, the female with whom such a marriage is contracted, he who gives her away, and the sacrificing priest, as the fifth, all fall into hell.'

Though there are many paths to hell, the ways to heaven are few but plain. In all the earlier literature of Indian religion — the Vedas and the Brahmanas — the first requirement for eternal reward is to make use of the sacrifices which only the priests could offer to the gods. 'The sacrificer goes to the heavenly world,' we read. 'He who sacrifices assuredly sacrifices with the desire that there may be for him also a place in the world of the gods.' And the offerings might be made not only on behalf of those yet alive but also for the sake of the departed. Almost as sure a means were the practice of ascetic austerities and the devout study of the Vedas.

With the rise of Hinduism, however, which became the dominant religion more than a thousand years ago, the earlier emphasis on 'salvation by works' yielded in large measure to the belief in 'salvation by faith.' Not through



his own performances in acts of ritual or self-discipline could a man attain to the heaven of savior gods like Krishna, but only through intense personal devotion to his chosen deity whose saving grace would respond to faith. And for the true philosopher, in every age of Indian thought, neither works nor faith were the means to salvation. Salvation could come only through mystical knowledge, and it meant not a heaven of worldly delights but the final peace of union with that impersonal Absolute which is the one reality behind all change.

The Buddhist teaching about retribution is well summed up in a passage from the famous collection of sayings known as the Dhammapada. One of its verses declares that 'some people are born again; evil-doers go to hell; righteous people go to heaven; those who are free from all worldly desires attain Nirvana.' True salvation, in other words, is not rebirth in any luxurious heaven but the attainment of that state of perfect peace and enlightenment which follows the extinction of desire. The goal can seldom be achieved, however, in this present existence, and for the many righteous men who fail to reach it there remains the chance to be reborn in some heaven from which they may later descend to try once more for the ultimate bliss of Nirvana. Strictly speaking, therefore, Buddhist heavens are not supreme rewards but consolation prizes. The lower heavens are the recompense for good moral conduct; the higher heavens are the recompense for intellectual and mystical achievements to be won by mental training and meditation.

The simplest moral requirements of Buddhism may be found in the familiar list of the five commandments which are binding upon laity and monks alike: not to take life, not



to steal, not to commit adultery, not to tell lies, and not to drink intoxicating liquors. These prohibitions are only the backbone of an ethical system that includes the highest moral virtues of the Buddha's time, such as filial piety, hospitality, and respect for religious teachers. And the whole of it is given a special flavor by the constant Buddhist emphasis upon charity and compassion. These, then, are the meritorious qualities that admit to the lesser heavens, and their corresponding vices deserve the penalty of hell.

But though Buddhism was never priest-ridden like Brahmanism, there is no little evidence in its literature of the influence of the monks in mixing with plain morality other requirements that are really ecclesiastical or professional. Special rewards, for example, are promised to those who study and recite certain scriptures, often with menacing prophecies of the fate of scoffers or heretics who deride or destroy them. To dishonor a monk is a sure way of going to hell, though no surer than to deceive the laity by pretending to be a monk. But to give clothing or food or drink to a monk, or flowers and incense to a shrine, or to build a monument over some relic of the Buddha are acts of devotion that will send a man to paradise.

Yet none can hope to enjoy the loftier spheres in heaven by conforming to mere morality. Since the happiness they provide is of an intellectual and mystical order they are open only to those who have prepared themselves on earth to appreciate these more rarefied satisfactions. To master and to practise the mental drill involved in meditations of growing intensity and to have experienced a series of mystical trances is the one path to the purity of those higher heavens where no lesser joys are to be found.



But Buddhism knows also of a warmer and more appealing gospel. Like that Hinduism from which it drew so much of religious value, it has room for the conception of salvation by faith. Alongside of the stricter and more philosophical schools there are others which preach a shorter way to heaven. From the sacred books of the 'Pure Land' sects, among which the worship of the Buddha Amitabha prevails, we learn that only faith in the saving divinity can win for the believer a home in the Western Paradise. Good works without that faith are of little avail, while the worst of sinners, if at the end he throws himself upon the mercy of Amitabha, cannot ultimately be lost. In its most extreme form the doctrine is held by the modern Shin sect in Japan, for their teaching is clear that men cannot be born in Amida's land 'through the accumulation of merits gained by their own moral and religious deeds.' Only the love of Amida, appropriated by faith, can save them. 'Those who have awakened this faith in the love of Amida which saves, are at once embraced in his light and destined to be born in the Pure Land after death.' So writes a twentieth century believer, who maintains that 'Amida is willing to save us as we are, ignorant and sinful,' for 'however sinful, all who believe in Amida and his will to save will surely be born in the Land of Happiness.'

China, too, as a country partly Buddhist, is familiar with this comforting doctrine. But it is not quite congenial to the systematic common-sense of the Chinese. More typical of the racial mind is the Taoist teaching about retribution, which is really a coarsened version of popular Buddhism. In Taoist treatises we can learn not only what punishments are provided in the ten courts of hell, but also, in great detail, what sort of sinners are to be found there. The list



affords a most interesting catalogue of the evil-doers whom everyone would like to see punished and of others who are specially obnoxious to Taoist priests. Among the culprits are numbered incompetent physicians and deceitful match-makers, dishonest clerks and escaped prisoners, disobedient slaves and nagging wives, lazy teachers and rich men who never give alms. Malefactors of a darker hue are the murderers and seducers, the brigands and harlots and robbers, the suicides and those who neglected their parents. There is specific mention, too, of those who used false weights, those who violated tombs, those who spread lying rumors, those who stole bricks or metal images from a temple, those who misused paper with written characters on it, and even those who neglected to give decent burial to dead dogs and cats.

There is no corresponding directory of departed souls who inherit heaven, but the frequent mention of those who will escape the hells provides a list of some of the virtues highly prized. In harmony with Chinese thought filial piety is foremost and in response to Buddhist influence generosity and charity to the sick and needy are warmly commended. Other grounds for exemption, perhaps less obvious, are ransoming animals in captivity in order to set them free, practising continence on certain days sacred to Taoist divinities, invoking the Buddhas every morning, and explaining to others a particular Taoist treatise on hell.

The Zoroastrianism of Persia, as a strongly ethical religion, is quite explicit about the moral standards by which the soul is judged to be fit for heaven or hell. More or less in order of importance, the sins it condemns are unnatural vice, murder, embezzlement, idleness, theft, malice, slander, arrogance, adultery, ingratitude, and



procrastination. But there are religious sins of no less importance such as idolatry, apostasy, heresy, and witchcraft. And certain ritual and legal requirements it is likewise perilous to neglect, for an unhappy future awaits those who ignore the celebration of seasonal festivals and the recitation of scriptures at appointed times, or who never undergo the great nine-day ceremony of purification. It is equally fatal to strike the sacred fire or to die without leaving a child or an adopted child.

As to heaven, it is declared that 'all good thoughts, all good words, all good deeds are the badge of the righteous for Paradise.' Among the ancient Persians the foremost virtue was liberality. 'For no one is it easier to arrive in heaven than for the liberal.' But truthfulness and sincerity are hardly less admired, and special commendation is awarded to justice, friendliness, gratitude, hospitality, charity, contentment, perseverance, and industry. Orthodoxy, too, has its heavenly reward; and orthodoxy means the firm belief that Ahura Mazda is the creator of all good and Ahriman the author of all evil, and freedom from doubt about the resurrection, heaven, and hell.

The Moslem standard of judgment is simpler than that of any other great religion. In the long run hell is peopled entirely with unbelievers and heaven with believers. For certain heinous sins Moslems will go to hell — for idolatry, apostasy, murder, sorcery, usury, disobedience to parents, flight in battle, adultery, or the false accusation of adultery. But unless they have renounced Allah by persistent apostasy, they will not be sent to hell if they are penitent, nor will they stay there forever. As the great theologian al-Ghazali asserts, 'There shall not abide eternally in the fire a single believer.' On the other hand, no unbeliever will



abide anywhere else. In the words of the Koran, 'Those who misbelieve and call our signs lies, they are the fellows of the Fire; they shall dwell therein for aye.' The only exception to that stern dogma is in favor of the children of infidels who are commonly thought to be destined to paradise. All Mohammedans, then, whatever the pains they may suffer for a time, are certain in the end of an eternity in heaven.

To conclude this slight sketch of the bases of judgment in several religions with an equally brief account of the Christian standards may well seem an unpardonably superficial treatment of an immense subject. Only a volume on 'The Christian Doctrine of Salvation' and another on 'Moral Theology' would be really adequate. Yet, for the sake of comparison, we must reluctantly run the risk, in order to note what likenesses may appear and to remind ourselves, if only in the most summary fashion, what have been the peculiar problems in our own religion. Above and beyond whatever details may be cited there is the universal belief, professed by all branches of the Christian Church, that the salvation of men, both here and hereafter, is the work of God in Christ. However hell and heaven may be imagined or described, they represent in the last analysis the fate of those who reject the redemptive love of God and the fate of those who by faith accept and appropriate it. Distinctions in the life after death are ultimately based on the relation of men to Christ.

If the Christian doctrine about distinctions in the after-life had always been confined to the teaching of Jesus it would be relatively simple. Jesus' own standards of judgment were often unconventional; he liked to remind his hearers that many people would not be saved who seemed



to be highly religious and respectable and many others would attain the Kingdom of God who were not supposed to be worthy. To the cities of his own people he proclaimed, 'It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon [those heathen cities] at the day of judgment than for you.' Again he declared, 'Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? And in thy name done many wonderful works? And then I will profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.' In short, 'many that are first shall be last; and the last first.' But however many will be the surprises of the last day, the principle of judgment is plainly asserted. It is a moral judgment based on moral conduct. Professions of religious zeal will not avail to save the man who cannot show the fruit of good works. 'Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.' And in his own picture of the Last Judgment the reward of 'the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world' is reserved for those who have ministered to the least of Christ's brethren — those who have fed the hungry, given drink to the thirsty, welcomed the stranger, clothed the naked, tended the sick, and visited the prisoners. No others are mentioned among the blessed who will inherit the Kingdom. And those who will be condemned to everlasting punishment are precisely those who have neglected these opportunities for service.

The teaching of the Church for the last nineteen centuries has of course accepted the ethical standard of judgment. The basis of distinction among departed souls has been, on the whole, a moral basis. So clearly has this rule



prevailed that the belief that the good go to heaven and the bad to hell has been universally held, and evidence is hardly needed to support so obvious a truism. Whatever other doctrines may have been unfamiliar to the masses, the moral code of Christianity with its future rewards and punishments was common property.

Of the virtues that merit eternal reward we hear much less than of the corresponding sins, for men have more often been warned than encouraged in most of the literature that deals with judgment and the after-life. But everyone knew what the Christian virtues were, and among them purity and charity were always singled out for special stress. Through all periods of Christianity from the first century onward the Catholic Church has maintained that the highest place in heaven is reserved for the martyrs, and next in rank come the saints who were virgins or celibates. Just below them, according to the medieval theologians, stand the theologians, the great doctors of divinity. As Aquinas sums it up, the martyrs have won the victory over the world, virgins over the flesh, and doctors over the Devil. In Protestantism, of course, there has been a less dogmatic grouping and, in the main, a stronger emphasis on faith as opposed to earning merit by good works.

As to the sins which lead to hell, we have not only the testimony of all the Church Fathers, but also the witness of popular literature in every age. In the Christian apocalypses of the early centuries and in the 'Visions' of the Middle Ages there is little difference of opinion. The Book of Revelation places in 'the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone' 'the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars.' The Apocalypse of Peter in the second century fills its hell with



adulterers, murderers, persecutors of the righteous, false witnesses, usurers, those who disobey their parents or masters, and — in keeping with the words of Jesus — all who trust in riches and have no pity on widows or orphans. The later Apocalypse of Paul describes the torments that await these same sinners and adds yet other varieties, such as unrighteous bishops, priests who lived greedy and sensual lives, deacons who kept money given them for the Church, and 'women who beautified themselves with paints and unguents and went to church to ensnare men.' Tertullian in the third century included among the seven capital sins adultery, fornication, murder, false witness, and fraud. And when we turn to medieval literature like the *Vision of Adamnan* and the *Vision of Alberic*, the same sort of sinners are to be found in the hells which they paint so vividly: — fratricides, thieves, liars, traitors, fraudulent merchants, tyrannical lords, adulterers, and panders. The classes of the condemned in Dante's *Inferno* are familiar to unnumbered readers — the lustful and the gluttonous, the violent and the false, panders and seducers, thieves and hypocrites — and worst of all, the traitors. All of the vices and crimes which incur damnation have long since been summed up by the Catholic Church in those Seven Capital Sins which lie at the root of all wickedness — pride, avarice, gluttony, lust, sloth, envy, and anger.

At no period, however, has the Christian Church, Catholic or Protestant, attempted to give a formal list of the sins which deserve the pains of hell. For sin is so largely a matter of inner motive and attitude that it can be described only in general terms. Such a general description is provided by the Catholic definition of mortal sin. A mortal sin must be a grievous offence against God and His



law and known at the time to be such; and it must be a deliberate act freely chosen. He who commits a mortal sin and fails to repent of it before he dies will go to hell. But no one can be certain, in any given case, whether a sin was mortal, for no one can be fully aware of all the personal circumstances of knowledge and consent that lay behind the act. Nor can anyone be positive as to whether repentance has taken place before the last breath. All that the Church can say is that none will be damned who has not deliberately and consciously defied God to the very end.

In its teaching about who will go to heaven and who will go to hell the Church has felt itself on firm ground so long as the standard of judgment was a moral standard. In so far as the basis of distinction was ethical there has naturally been a fundamental agreement in all periods and in all branches of Christianity. But what was needed to achieve salvation and to avoid damnation has not been confined to the sphere of morality. From the earliest days the sins deserving of hell included not only the graver offences against morality but sins of a nature more directly religious and others merely ecclesiastical. Idolatry, of course, was the most flagrant defiance of God Himself; blasphemy and atheism were but little less heinous; and the practice of sorcery and witchcraft was no better than a trafficking with demons. Sacrilege, too, might be a mortal sin, or the breaking of a monastic vow, or the profanation of holy days, or the buying and selling of Church offices. Before many centuries had passed even heresy had come to be viewed as a sin that merited eternal punishment. When orthodoxy became necessary to salvation, it was only natural that heresy should end in damnation. The stand-



ard of judgment was thus broadened to include the whole range of theological dogma; and among the sinners assembled on the left hand of the judging Messiah there were now numbered not merely those who had refused to serve the needy and aid the helpless but those also whose private opinions were not in harmony with the infallible decisions of Church councils. So dire, indeed, was the future fate of the unorthodox that even the Inquisition was justified on the plea that by applying the torch to the living heretic the Church might save his soul from a fiercer flame.

The Christian standard of judgment has been further modified by the doctrines of baptism and original sin. Early in the life of the Church there appeared the belief that baptism was necessary to salvation. All men deserve condemnation because of the original sin of Adam and only by the new birth of baptism can they be redeemed. Membership in the Church was therefore essential to eternal welfare; and even before the time of Augustine 'no salvation outside the Church' had become a familiar statement of the doctrine. If we grant the belief in original sin and the saving power of sacramental grace, there can be no reason to hesitate at the natural conclusion, so far as we are concerned with adult men and women who have had a chance to hear the Gospel and to accept or reject it. But what about the heathen who have never heard of Christ and the children who die before baptism? If heaven can never be their reward, are they therefore doomed to hell? These are questions so obvious and so urgent that they have demanded a response from every Christian generation; and in the answers have been reflected many shades of developing opinion.

With regard to unbaptized infants the doctrine finally



adopted by the Roman Catholic Church is as humane as logic will permit. Since 'original sin' deserves everlasting punishment and since only baptism can wipe out original sin, there can be no hope that children who die before baptism will ever attain to heaven. Yet the sort of hell that is reserved for them, as we shall later see, is of the mildest variety. It involves no pain except 'the pain of loss' — the loss of heaven and of the vision of God. Otherwise, they lead a happy life in a 'limbo' of their own. And since the desire for baptism may be counted in certain circumstances as equal to baptism itself, not all who die without the sacrament will suffer even these negative penalties. But the older and harsher opinion, gradually abandoned by the Church of Rome, was revived by certain Protestant thinkers. Luther and the strict Lutherans felt obliged to regard the unbaptized infants as lost, and according to Calvin and many of his followers only the 'elect' among such children could escape the condemnation of hell. Even among early Reformers, however, there were others, like Zwingli, who repudiated the belief; the Church of England and the Methodist Church have never taught it; and today nearly all Protestants have openly abandoned a dogma so flagrantly at odds with the spirit of Christ.

The fate of the heathen has been another problem for Christian theology. Are the millions who have never heard the name of Christ to be doomed to eternal torments? Augustine thought they were, for no matter how good they might be, they were not Christians and their virtues were only 'glittering vices.' Many of the early Church Fathers agreed with him, and not a few in the Middle Ages. But in succeeding centuries the Church of Rome has slowly developed a doctrine more flexible and more charitable.



Faith in Christ is no doubt necessary to salvation, but it may be 'implicit faith,' the only faith possible for those who have never known of him. Baptism, too, may be indispensable; but 'the baptism of desire' may be enough for those who have never been reached by the sacraments of the Church. Furthermore, we must take into account the ignorance of those who have never heard the Gospel and even the 'invincible ignorance' of those who have heard but not heeded. In short, the Catholic Church is unwilling to dogmatize as to what heathen will be saved and what will not. Divine Providence is not wholly dependent on human coöperation, and what God can do outside the regular channels of redemption He alone knows. Indeed, a Pope himself declared some seventy years ago that 'those who labor under invincible ignorance concerning our holy religion and who carefully keep the natural law and its precepts engraven by God on the hearts of all, and are ready to obey God, and who lead an honest and upright life, can, by the operating power of the divine light of grace, attain to eternal life.' True, they cannot save themselves by their own works, but none of them is beyond the reach of redeeming grace.

The official creeds of earlier Protestantism held out no real hope for the heathen. In Lutheran doctrine only baptism could save them, and Calvinism could only admit that a few might be rescued by an extraordinary exercise of God's 'electing mercy.' For several centuries these stringent opinions were held by all who valued their reputation for orthodoxy; but within the last few generations their rigor has been steadily modified. Few Protestants today are prepared to assert that all the heathen are damned. Of those who deal with the problem in our own time some are



inclined to a version of the Roman view; others stretch wider the loophole suggested by Calvinism; still others, of the modernist type, denying the rigid divisions of heaven and hell, believe that in the life to come there will be opportunity for all those to know Christ who in this life were never numbered among his followers.

More fundamental than any question about the fate of particular groups are the two eternal questions: 'Is the fate of the soul decided forever at death?' and 'How many will eventually be saved?' It is in Christianity, of course, that these problems are especially pressing because in orthodox Christianity heaven and hell are eternal states to one of which everyone eventually goes. In Hinduism and Buddhism they are only stages in an endless circle of life; in Zoroastrianism the final renewal of the world brings the universal triumph of righteousness; and in Islam the decision is clear that all Moslems finally attain to heaven and all infidels end in hell.) But though the official position of the Church has long since been established, it sometimes met with disagreement in the early centuries, and in modern times has been severely shaken by a growing liberalism.

In spite of the belief of Origen and Gregory of Nyssa and others that all men would be purged of their sins in the after-life and ultimately be worthy of heaven, the Church maintained that we have no assurance of universal salvation and that hell is no passing phase of existence but a permanent state. Indeed, 'universalism' — the doctrine that no one will be forever damned — has always been treated as a heresy not only among Catholics but among strict Protestants. The latter have commonly agreed with an article of belief set forth by the Church of England in



1553 which asserted quite clearly that 'they also are worthy of condemnation who endeavor at this time to restore the dangerous opinion that all men, be they never so ungodly, shall at length be saved, when they have suffered pains for their sins a certain time appointed by God's justice.' Yet, for the last four hundred years there have always been optimists, now standing alone and now gathered into sects, who have maintained that no punishment will be everlasting and that all departed souls will one day be welcomed into paradise. Only one denomination has taken the name 'Universalist,' but many in other communions have long since come to share the same views.

But, after all, it is quite as dogmatic to assert that all men will go to heaven as to assert that some men will go to hell. A less radical and more promising attack on the standard of orthodoxy has been made by others who insist that this life is not the only field for testing and that the judgment of the soul at death is therefore not final. 'No probation after death' has always been the declaration of the Roman Church; and whenever Protestantism has spoken officially it has usually echoed the verdict that the fate of the soul is settled forever at death. Beyond this life there is no 'second chance'; there are only fixed classes in definite regions. Indeed, the doctrine of predestination and election, more clear-cut in Calvinism than elsewhere, would settle the future of the soul not merely at death but even before birth. In contrast, however, with the orthodox of every group, liberals of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries have denied that death ends all opportunity for further probation. It is their confident claim that wherever there is life there must be growth, and wherever there is growth there can be no permanent labels. Rewards and



punishments will continue to attend upon good and evil, even as they do here; but they cannot be flatly assigned forever on the basis of a few years of earthly life. Instead of rigid classification there will continue the unending process of redemption. And God will find his divine satisfaction not in viewing the two groups of the saved and the damned, eternally severed, but in pursuing unwearied his chosen mission of seeking the lost.

In this <sup>book</sup> the author  
has not given anything of his own,  
but has cited examples with  
no solidarity or scientific reason.



## CHAPTER XX

### THE INTERMEDIATE STATE: PURGATORY

THOSE religions which teach that at some future date all the dead will rise again and submit to the Last Judgment have this important problem to face — what happens to the departed between death and the resurrection? If their final state is to be determined by the judgment, what is to be their intermediate state?

Zoroastrianism solves the problem in its own peculiar way. After the individual judgment at death the soul goes straight to heaven or hell and there abides until the resurrection and the Day of Judgment. Three days after that ordeal comes the Renovation of the World when hell is abolished and all men enter on an eternal existence in the new universe where perfect goodness and joy will reign forever. In other words, heaven and hell are distinctions that prevail before the judgment and not for any length of time thereafter. The intermediate state is therefore not an interim preceding a future heaven or hell. Life in heaven or hell is the intermediate state, ending after the resurrection. The only exception is offered by the Persian teaching that in addition to the chief abodes there is a third place suited to those whose good and bad deeds are evenly balanced. These neutral spirits dwell in a neutral sphere, without punishment or reward, until they are released at the resurrection.

The problem has been far more baffling in Judaism and Christianity because in those religions the Last Judgment



is supposed to determine the destiny of the soul, whether to heaven or hell; and its status in the interval after death has consequently been a natural subject for varied speculation. In strict logic, if the Judgment Day was to be given its full meaning, disembodied souls ought to dwell in the old Sheol, half-alive and enjoying no retribution of any kind. But by the time the doctrine of the resurrection had begun to be widely accepted the belief in individual reward and punishment had become so strong that it was difficult to imagine good and bad as faring alike until the Judgment Day. So we find in those confused apocalypses which tell of the resurrection and of judgment no longer the dim and neutral Sheol of Old Testament times but a graded and classified Sheol where the dead are sorted out according to their past record. No two writers give quite the same picture, but the general tendency is to give the good at least a foretaste of their ultimate bliss and the wicked a preparatory punishment. In the earlier books which leave no room for the thought of a resurrection of sinners, the punishment in Sheol is of course not merely preparatory but final.

The doctrine that Sheol provides a preliminary version of the ultimate heaven or hell was widely accepted in Jesus' time, as we learn from his parable of Dives and Lazarus. The beggar who was carried at death to 'Abraham's bosom' and the rich man who was delivered to torments are types of the good and the bad who will get their deserts in the intermediate state long before the Judgment Day has revealed its awards. And such, in brief, was the orthodox teaching which eventually prevailed in Judaism. The righteous go at death to a blessed abode in the heavens and the wicked to a place of fiery torment. The last stage



of retribution will follow the resurrection and the judgment; but it will differ from the first stage only in this respect — that the departed will then experience happiness and pain no longer as mere spirits but in their risen bodies. Otherwise the intermediate state is so much like the final that the same names were commonly used for the temporary and the eternal abodes.

In the earliest days of the Christian Church there was little thought of the intermediate state, for the expectation that Christ would soon come to judge the world made the interval of small consequence. But with the indefinite postponement of the Second Advent the resurrection and the Last Judgment were likewise deferred, and so the problem of the long interval reappeared to puzzle theologians. The difficulty was to reconcile individual judgment and retribution at death with the Last Judgment and retribution after the resurrection. If too much was included in the former process the latter was emptied of value; while if too little was included, sinners might expect to enjoy the same lot as the good for thousands of years until the great day arrived. Neither alternative was welcomed by the orthodox, and a compromise was the inevitable result. For many centuries the general conclusion was widely accepted that in a subterranean Hades (a notion inherited from both Jews and Greeks) the righteous enjoy a measure of reward not equal to their future heaven and the wicked suffer a degree of punishment not equal to their future hell. The intermediate state was thus a slightly reduced version of ultimate retribution. As Justin phrased it in the second century, 'The souls of the pious remain in a better place, while those of the unjust and wicked are in a worse, waiting for the time of judg-



ment.' Tertullian, in the following century, is more explicit. 'All souls,' he says, 'are shut up in Hades... the soul undergoes punishment and consolation in Hades in the interval, while it awaits its alternative of judgment, in a certain anticipation either of gloom or of glory.... The soul undergoes in Hades some compensatory discipline without prejudice to the full process of the resurrection when the recompense will be administered through the flesh besides.' But Tertullian was one of the first to admit what Catholic theology has ever since maintained that martyrs go straight to heaven, for 'the sole key to unlock paradise [at death] is your own life's blood.'

Just as Christian pictures of the Last Judgment have been largely determined by the famous words of Jesus in Saint Matthew's Gospel, so their ideas about the intermediate state have been colored by the parable of Lazarus. The influence of that vivid story is evident in the description given by Hippolytus in the third century. He writes of 'Hades in which the souls both of the righteous and the unrighteous are detained. Hades is... a locality beneath the earth in which the light of the world does not shine... a guard-house for souls, at which the angels are stationed as guards, distributing according to each one's deeds the temporary punishments for different characters.... The righteous... are at present detained in Hades, but not in the same place with the unrighteous.... But the face of the fathers of the righteous is seen to be always smiling, as they wait for the rest and eternal revival in heaven which succeed this location. And we call it by the name "Abraham's bosom.'" In fact, 'Abraham's bosom' became a common term in the Church for the resting-place of the righteous after death.



Augustine, too, in a later age, is in general agreement with this doctrine. Between death and the resurrection, he says, 'the soul dwells in a hidden retreat where it enjoys rest or suffers affliction just in proportion to the merit it has earned by the life which it led on earth.' And again, 'all souls have, when they quit this world, their different receptions. The good have joy; the evil, torments. But when the resurrection takes place both the joy of the good will be fuller and the torments of the wicked heavier, when they shall be tormented in the body.'

Though widely maintained in the first five centuries of our era, the opinion that the intermediate state provides a foretaste of heaven for the good and of hell for the bad yielded in time to another solution of the problem, a solution which took final form in the Roman doctrine of purgatory. The idea that souls who needed discipline or purgation might receive it before the Day of Judgment and thereby escape an eternity of hell had not been unknown among the Church Fathers. Origen taught in the third century that the process of purification begun on earth continues after death, for in the intermediate state the wicked suffer from 'the flame of their own fire' — the tortures of conscience. Thus 'the fire of God's vengeance avails for the purgation of souls,' and God cleanses them of sin before the resurrection. In the fourth century Gregory of Nyssa went so far as to declare that even after the Last Judgment the pain of fire was simply remedial and that its healing activity would eventually restore the sinful, 'for the chastisement, however painful, of moral disease is a healing of its wickedness,' and 'according to the amount of the ingrained wickedness of each will be the duration of his cure.'



But the orthodox belief in an endless hell was so firmly rooted that the milder views of Gregory and others were never accepted. It was perfectly possible, however, to keep hell for eternal damnation and to confine to the intermediate state the saving process of purgation. And that solution was encouraged by the speculation of Augustine. In one well-known passage he is rather dubious on the subject. 'It is a matter that may be enquired into,' he writes, 'and either ascertained or left doubtful, whether some believers shall pass through a kind of purgatorial fire, and in proportion as they have loved with more or less devotion the goods that perish, be less or more quickly delivered from it.' But in his *City of God* he is more positive. 'Temporary punishments,' he asserts, 'are suffered by some in this life only, by others after death, by others both now and then; but all of them before that last and strictest judgment. But of those who suffer temporary punishments after death, all are not doomed to those everlasting pains which are to follow that judgment.'

The idea of purgatory suggested by Augustine was accepted and developed in the sixth century by Pope Gregory the Great. He was the first to lay down the doctrine dogmatically as one that 'ought to be believed.' According to his teaching, the saints who are perfectly righteous will go straight to heaven at death and the perfectly wicked to hell; but the imperfectly righteous will go to purgatory, for 'it is to be believed that before the judgment there is a purgatorial fire' for certain 'minor sins,' intended for those who 'lacked somewhat of perfect righteousness.' But 'a man will not be cleansed in purgatory of even the least sins unless during his lifetime he deserved by his good works to receive such favor.' It was thus possible for just



and deserving men to atone hereafter for trifling sins before the dreadful day of reckoning and thereby to attain to heaven.

The growth of this doctrine during the Middle Ages was made possible by a parallel growth in the doctrine of Penance which must be understood in outline if the teaching about purgatory is to be clear. The two dogmas dovetail into each other, and in the form which they take in Aquinas and his successors they have been taught ever since by the Church of Rome.

Penance is the sacrament by which the Church, through its priests, hears the confessions of the penitent sinner, grants him absolution in the name of God and thereby frees him from punishment in hell. But such a forgiven sinner, though released from *eternal* punishment, must submit to *temporal* punishment either in this life or in the next or in both. Very few, however, can wholly atone for their sins before death; all others go to purgatory where the remaining penalties can be paid. The sacrament of Penance, then, makes it possible for every sinner, if he will only take advantage of it, to avoid the damnation of hell. As this doctrine came to be fully accepted, purgatory grew more and more important, for it was to purgatory that all men except saints and hardened sinners were destined. And the ultimate fate of all souls in purgatory is not hell but heaven. A new and vital significance was thus given to the intermediate state.

As to the details of life in purgatory the Church has never been dogmatic. It is quite definite about the class of people who go there but not about the nature of the purgation they must undergo. Yet if official decrees are reticent on the subject, theologians and preachers have been more



expansive. There has been a general agreement, for instance, that the pains to be endured are the pains of fire — a fire that in popular belief is of a genuine material kind. And the suffering, as Aquinas and others have pointed out, is far more severe than any we know in this life. For some, of course, it will be very brief, and for none can it last beyond the Day of Judgment. But otherwise the purifying torment is hardly to be distinguished from the agonies of hell. It was quite natural, therefore, that in the 'vision' literature of the Middle Ages and in the imagery of sermons purgatory should be painted in the same colors that were used for hell. Dante is among the few who clearly distinguish the two in character and atmosphere. Purgatory for him is 'that second realm where the human spirit is purified and becomes worthy to ascend to heaven.' He dwells upon its pains as not merely punitive but cleansing. Not demons but angels are the ministers in the process of purgation.

The Roman doctrine of purgatory deals not only with what happens to sinners in that future state but also with what the living can do to help them. The blessed in paradise are beyond the need of help and the damned in hell are beyond its reach. The souls in purgatory, however, can be aided by the prayers of the Church and by the sacrifice of the Mass. Such offerings avail with God to lighten their pain and to shorten its duration. In words set forth by the sixteenth century Council of Trent, 'There is a Purgatory, and the souls there detained are helped by the prayers of the faithful, but principally by the acceptable sacrifice of the altar.'

In thus carefully defining what souls can be prayed for and what cannot, the dogma of Rome is perhaps unique.



But the custom of praying for the departed is familiar in other religions of salvation, and more widely than elsewhere it prevails in Mahayana Buddhism. Among the Chinese, in fact, the chief function of popular Buddhism is to provide means by which the dead can be aided by the prayers and offerings of their surviving kin. The recitation of sacred scriptures by the priests is the usual method, a ceremony often referred to by western writers as 'masses for the dead.' The performance, of course, is not a 'mass' in any sense, but it is thought to be just as efficacious as a mass in improving the lot of the deceased. One of the scriptures, for example, known as 'The Hell-conquering Sutra,' if recited every day for a year, will exempt the dead from passing through hell and cause them to enter heaven. Most powerful of all to extend his blessings to the tormented is the great Bodhisattva Ti-tsang, 'the savior of the lower world.' He is the gracious divinity who has vowed to save all who suffer, even those who have been doomed to the world below; and with his jewelled staff he can open the gates of hell and dispel its darkness. A hundred thousand pilgrims flock to his sacred mountain every year, eager to win for their lost ones the benefit of his saving power. And many of them will buy from the monks one of the standard prayers painted on yellow paper. A sample of such a petition would read as follows: 'We pray that you will have compassion on the soul of —, aged —, who was born on the — day of the — year, and whose soul has now taken leave of its earth-life and has rejoined the immortals. Alas! time passes all too quickly. We weep when our thoughts turn to the loved one we have lost. We implore you to take him from the place of pain and to lead him to happiness. This day we have carried out the



proper ceremonies on behalf of the dead. We implore that he may be admitted to joy and peace until such time as he may be born again into the world of men. In the name of the Buddhas we implore you to save his soul.' And then before the image of Ti-tsang the little paper will be burned with an offering of incense.

In addition to encouraging prayers and masses for the souls in purgatory the Roman Catholic Church has long approved a further means for extending them aid. This is provided by the 'Treasury of Merits' and the consequent use of 'indulgences.' The theory of the 'Treasury of Merits,' which had been fully developed by the end of the Middle Ages, is based on the belief that Christ, in his life and death, achieved far more than was required for his work of redemption and that the Virgin Mary and the saints, in like manner, did more than was demanded for their own salvation. They thereby earned an immense surplus of merit so far beyond their own needs that they themselves cannot benefit from it. God has therefore been pleased to recognize this surplus as a treasury which the Church inherits; and He permits the Church to guard and control and distribute its benefits. The Church, in consequence, is able to draw upon this deposited merit and to apply it to the advantage not only of the living but of the dead.

The method by which this treasure is dispensed is the use of 'indulgences,' a practice often misunderstood and abused but officially approved by the Church of Rome. An indulgence is not a permission to commit sin nor is it an exemption from any law or duty. It can be given only to a penitent sinner who has been absolved from the guilt of his sin by a priest. But such a penitent, as we have seen, must still submit to temporal punishment in this life or the



next. What an indulgence can do, then, is to place at his disposal a portion of the merits of Christ and the saints which are stored up in the Church's treasury. On condition that he perform some pious work he is thus granted remission from part or all of the penalty that he would otherwise have to pay. Or to put it more accurately in the words of Thomas Aquinas, 'he who gains indulgences is not thereby released outright from what he owes as a penalty, but is provided with the means of paying it.' To put it crudely, he is given a check on the bank of the treasury by the Pope or his agent, and in that form — thanks to the merits of Christ and the saints — he is able to pay his debt. And what is important for us to note is that the system of indulgences is used to benefit not only the living but the departed in purgatory. The Church, of course, cannot directly control their punishment, but her decisions, made known to God through prayer, are considered to be effective. So the living, by winning indulgences, can help to shorten or lighten the pains of their beloved in the world beyond.

A similar theory prevailed in the later stages of Zoroastrianism. Its priestly leaders developed not only a system of penance but even the conception of a 'constantly beneficial treasury' supplied by the surplus good works of righteous men, a storehouse kept by the angels in heaven and used by them to benefit those whose merit was insufficient. But since the Persians had no purgatory, the extra credit was thought to take effect at the moment when the soul was judged, and might well determine that it was fit for heaven rather than hell. In less organized form the same idea is familiar in Mahayana Buddhism. The great Bodhisattvas (or future Buddhas), by their



beneficent deeds, have been piling up good karma for uncounted ages, and they have vowed that this should serve not for their own advancement only. According to their purpose of redemption it is transferred to needy souls in hell that their progress toward perfect enlightenment may be furthered.

The Church of Rome stands alone among Christian communions in its doctrines of purgatory and of indulgences. The Orthodox Eastern Church retains the earlier view of the intermediate state — that 'the souls of the righteous are in light and rest, with a foretaste of eternal happiness; but the souls of the wicked are in a state the reverse of this.' It denies the existence of any distinct place called 'purgatory' and rejects the thought of material fire and the scheme of indulgences. But it concedes that the faithful departed can be aided by prayers and by the sacrifice of the Mass.

The orthodox teaching of Protestantism is in far more violent opposition to Roman doctrine. More than one early reformer, like Wiclif, had assailed the belief in purgatory, and one of the immediate causes of the Reformation was Luther's attack on the use of indulgences. Unlike the Catholic teaching about the resurrection and the judgment or about the ultimate nature of heaven and hell, the doctrine of purgatory was a centre of controversy in the Reformation period. Luther not only repudiated the idea of a treasury of merits but eventually abandoned the notion of purgatory. Calvin declared that 'overcurious enquiry respecting the intermediate state is neither lawful nor useful.' It was clear to him that 'the souls of pious men... depart into a state of blessed rest where they wait with joy and pleasure for the fruition of the promised



glory, and... the reprobate... are confined and bound in chains till they are brought forth to the punishment to which they are doomed.' In other words, Calvin, like the other Protestant leaders, believed that all men go to heaven or hell immediately at death. On this point the Westminster Confession of the Presbyterians is quite explicit. 'The souls of the righteous,' it asserts, 'being then made perfect in holiness, are received into the highest heavens, where they behold the face of God in light and glory, waiting for the full redemption of their bodies: and the souls of the wicked are cast into hell, where they remain in torments and utter darkness, reserved to the judgment of the great day. Besides these two places for souls separated from their bodies, the Scripture acknowledgeth none.' And the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England are in full agreement when they state with some vigor that 'the Romish Doctrine concerning Purgatory... is a fond thing, vainly invented, and grounded upon no warranty of Scripture, but rather repugnant to the word of God.' To put it briefly, the standard teaching of Protestantism from that day to this has declared that the intermediate state before the resurrection is intermediate only in reference to the presence or absence of the body. The intermediate state for the saved is heaven without the body and the final state is heaven with the body; the intermediate state for the lost is hell without the body and the final state is hell with the body.

On one fundamental point, however, Catholics and Protestants are agreed. The dogma of both branches of the Church rejects the belief that at death the soul enters upon a long sleep and never awakes till the resurrection. That heresy had been known among small groups from the




earliest Christian times and was revived at the time of the Reformation by the Anabaptists. Calvin was only one among many to attack the theory — as Tertullian had attacked it thirteen hundred years before; and the English Forty-two Articles gave judgment in 1553 that 'they which say that the souls of such as depart do sleep, being without all sense, feeling, or perceiving, until the day of judgment ... do utterly dissent from the right belief declared to us in Holy Scripture.' Though the 'sleep-theory' appeared again in nineteenth-century England, it has found no favor among conservative or liberal thinkers, for in nearly all Christian teaching the confidence prevails that whatever may be the state of the departed after death, the soul is still in full possession of consciousness and memory.

Outside of the Roman Church and of rigidly conservative Protestantism there has been much modern speculation about the intermediate state. Since the Church of England belongs to neither group, her thinkers in the past few generations have had not a little to say on the subject. The net result, on the part of one group, has been to produce a milder type of purgatory devoid of its Roman features. The whole mechanical apparatus of indulgences has of course been discarded for good; and even penal fire has disappeared. On the other hand there is no sympathy with the Protestant denial of a third state other than heaven or hell. The intermediate state is truly a preparation for a future heaven, a time of purifying discipline, of growth in sanctity, and of progress toward spiritual maturity. In that career of development the prayers of those on earth can bring effective aid to the departed. In short, the High-Church Anglican position is nearly in accord with that of the Orthodox Eastern Church.



Still another modern group, far more radical in its views, is recruited from several Protestant communions. Its members have wholly rejected the notion of an intermediate state, because they have abandoned the dogma of a resurrection and a Last Judgment. By definition the intermediate state is the state of the soul between death and the resurrection. But if one of these fixed points is removed, there is no further reason for calling the state 'intermediate.' Once the idea of an interim has been dropped, the theme of discussion is simply the eternal problem of what happens to the soul after death. Yet if these theologians of the modernist type have given up the old terms and the familiar framework, they have retained much that was significant in the Roman purgatory. Indeed, their views are in some respects more congenial to Catholics than to their old-fashioned Protestant brethren. They cannot agree with the latter that a perfect heaven or an utter hell are the only two possible destinations of a departing spirit. No one, they feel, can be quite good enough for the one or quite bad enough for the other. The state of the soul the day after death cannot be greatly different from its state the day before; and progress and growth must still remain essential to its life. For purgatory as a place of penal retribution they have no use; but if it is to be only the name for future purification and development, it is gladly accepted. In fact the liberal theology of our day has tended to substitute purgatory for hell, since it usually conceives the after-life, for all men, as a continuous process approaching perfection.





## CHAPTER XXI

### HELL

ALL religions that are concerned with the salvation of the human soul promise future rewards to the good and future punishments to the evil. They may differ as to what they mean by salvation and as to what they mean by good and evil, but they are agreed about reward and punishment. Hell is therefore a feature common to religions as diverse as Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Zoroastrianism, Orphism, Judaism, Islam, and Christianity. Strictly defined, in Christian doctrine, it is the place of *eternal* punishment; but elsewhere we may use the term 'hell' for the region where evil souls are punished, whether for a long time or a short.

To survey the hells imagined by believers in all parts of the world for the last twenty-five hundred years is an experience that may be entertaining if we are in a frivolous or cynical mood. The ingenious variety exposed to our gaze is amusing enough if we are disposed to be amused. But in a soberer frame of mind we are likely to be depressed by a spectacle which does little credit to human nature; for in depicting the tortures of the condemned, priests and law-givers and popular writers have displayed the worst features of their own characters more often than the best; and a zeal for virtue has been far less apparent than a vindictive pleasure in planning and prophesying the agonies that await the lost.

The Oriental mind has shown a luxuriant fertility in



devising horrors for the wicked in the world to come, and no race has outdone the Hindu in imaginative pictures of doom. In the earliest Indian literature, the Rig-Veda, produced long before the idea of personal salvation had appeared, we find only hints of the hell of later times. It is a deep hollow below 'the three earths' into which the gods are besought to hurl the wicked.

O Indra-Soma, dash the evil-doers down  
 Into the pit, the gloom profound and bottomless  
 So that not one of them may ever thence emerge;  
 Such be your wrathful might to overpower them.

In the Atharva-Veda of later date the conception has grown more definite. There we learn that hell is black, blind, and dark. There, too, we find one of the most gruesome of all visions of particular punishment. We see a little group of those who have refused to give to Brahmans; they are sitting in a pool of stale blood, chewing hair.

For fuller descriptions of hell, however, we must turn to the law-books which date from the early centuries of our era. The Laws of Manu and the Institutes of Vishnu are specially to be noted for the lively details they afford. || Manu mentions twenty-one hells by name. In one is a flaming river, in another a forest with sword-leaved trees, like those which Dante saw. In still others men are bound and mangled, devoured by ravens and owls, scorched in hot sand and boiled in jars. More elaborate is the account in the Institutes of Vishnu which likewise treat of twenty-one hells. Their Sanskrit names are not easy to master; but a translation will give a series of horrid hints as to what goes on in these infernal compartments. There are the hells called Darkness, Complete Darkness, Howling, Great Howling, Black Rope, Great Hell, Restoring to Life,



No Intermission (the famous Avici Hell), Burning, Parching, Pressing Together, Ravens, Bud, Striking Clay, Iron-spiked, Frying-pan, Rough Roads, Thorny Trees, Flame River, Sword-leaved Forest, and Iron Fetters. If we turn from these suggestive names to the text of the book itself we meet with a picture of varied torments as hideously complete as may be found in any literature. 'Sinners are dragged hither and thither upon even and uneven roads, by the dire ministers of Yama [the King of Hell], and conducted to hell by them, with menacing gestures. There they are devoured by dogs and jackals, by hawks, crows, herons, cranes, and other carnivorous animals having fire in their mouths, and by serpents and scorpions. They are scorched by blazing fire, pierced by thorns, divided into parts by saws, and tormented by thirst. They are agitated by hunger and by fearful troops of tigers, and faint away at every step on account of the foul stench.... Casting wistful glances upon the food and drink of others, they receive blows from ministers of Yama, whose faces are similar to those of crows, herons, cranes, and other horrid animals. Here they are boiled in oil, and there pounded with pestles or ground in iron or stone vessels.... Here, enveloped in terrible darkness, they are devoured by worms and jackals and other horrible animals having flames in their mouths. There again they are tormented by frost, or have to step through unclean things, or the departed spirits eat one another, driven to distraction by hunger. In one place they are beaten with their deeds in a former existence, in another they are suspended from trees and the like, with a rope, or shot with heaps of arrows or cut in pieces. In another place, again, walking upon thorns, and their bodies encircled by snakes, they are



tormented with grinding machines, and dragged on by their knees. Their backs, heads, and shoulders are fractured, the necks of these poor beings are not stouter than a needle, and their bodies... are unable to bear torments. Having thus been tormented in the hells and suffered most acute pain, the sinners have to endure further pangs in their migration through animal bodies.'

The last sentence reminds us of the status of all hells in the systems of Indian religion: they are not the only form of punishment nor are they eternal for any individual. Like the various heavens, they are simply places where souls abide in the interval between incarnations in human or animal form.

The same scheme, including similar hells, is found in Buddhist doctrines, for Buddhism arose in India in the fifth century before Christ and continued to develop there for over twelve hundred years, spreading in the course of that time, to China and Japan. Since it is of Indian origin, its teaching about hell is much like that of Brahmanism and Hinduism; and since it was adopted throughout all the Far East, the same beliefs have long since grown familiar over that wider area. Roughly speaking, there are two main types — the Hinayana and the Mahayana. The Hinayana, which now prevails in Ceylon and Burma, was the first to take shape and conforms the more closely to the earliest Buddhism. The Mahayana, which began to develop in India just before the time of Christ, has been the form more widely accepted in China and Japan.

The Hinayana has laid far less emphasis than its rival upon the fortunes of the soul in the after-life, but its sacred books are not without evidence of woes in store for the wicked. In the Majjhima Nikaya, Gotama the Buddha is



represented as describing some of the tortures of hell, where, under the eye of Yama and his wardens, sinners submit to penalties like these: some are harnessed to chariots and driven to and fro over a fiery expanse, some climb up and down a huge mountain of red-hot embers, and some plunge head over heels into a glowing caldron of brass. Others are seized by the minions of the infernal king and laid out flat on their backs. Through their hands and feet and chests are driven red-hot pegs; and then they are 'trimmed' with axes. Still others, less fortunate, are attacked by needle-mouthed creatures who rip away skin, hide, flesh, tendons, and bones and devour the raw marrow. Most unhappy of all, perhaps, is the man who is hauled up from a burning river with a fish-hook by the servants of Yama who pry open his mouth with a crowbar and thrust down a glowing ball of copper, and when he complains that he is thirsty (surely a moderate description of his sensations), they pour molten copper down his gullet.

Some verses from the Jatakas supply us with other details:

Enormous worms with iron mouths, piercing their victim's skin,  
Devour his flesh right greedily and suck the blood therein....  
Crows, ravens, vultures, jackals, too, all armed with iron jaw,  
Entomb the struggling wretch alive in their insatiate maw.

And similar stanzas tell of the pains of those who are blown about by an intolerable hot wind, those who climb a fearful blazing mountain studded with razors, and those who writhe in a river of boiling water covered with iron lotuses and sharp leaves.

Other books that offer less of picturesque invention give us memorable facts about the depth of hell or the duration of its pangs. A commentary on the Dhammapada speaks



of 'the Hell of the Iron Caldron,' which is sixty leagues in width, and men who are sent to it 'after sinking thirty thousand years' reach the bottom. The Sutta Nipata contains a list of ten hells. In the first of these the length of punishment is equivalent to the time required to empty a huge load of sesamum seed when a man takes one seed at a time every hundred years. And life in each one of the succeeding hells is twenty times as long as that in its predecessor, so that the total represents a fairly tedious period. More exact is the record of a hell which burns the sinner for 576,000,000 years. These hells may be 'temporary,' but one can only infer that the difference between the time they demand and 'eternal' punishment must often seem negligible to the occupants.

Mahayana Buddhism supplies an even greater wealth of terrifying information about the future suffering of sinners. In a life of Buddha written about eighteen hundred years ago we read that 'some are made to drink molten iron of the color of fire, others are lifted aloft screaming on a red-hot iron pillar, others are baked like flour, thrown with their heads downward into iron jars; others are miserably burned in heaps of heated charcoal; some are devoured by fierce dreadful dogs with iron teeth, others by brain-devouring birds.... Others... are split like timber with axes, but even in that agony they do not die, being supported in their vital powers by their previous actions [karma].' And there is later mention of 'those miserable wretches' who 'having mouths as small as the eye of a needle and bellies as big as a mountain are tortured with the pains of hunger and thirst.'

But the standard hell of Mahayana Buddhism is far more elaborate than this little sketch would imply. It



consists of eight hot hells and eight cold hells, deep below ground, each surrounded by sixteen little hells — a total of two hundred and seventy-two. So widely known is the scheme and so lively are many of its details that a glance at the system will be rewarding. The eight hot hells are these: 1. *Samjiva*, where the victims tear each other's flesh with metal claws and are then revived by a cool wind in order to undergo further torture. 2. *Kalasutra*, where wretches are lashed with fiery wires, while a wind corrupts and poisons the wounds. 3. *Samghata*, where iron elephants stamp flesh and bones to pieces. 4. *Raurava*, the hell of lamentations, where constant shrieks proceed from the sufferers in fiery iron caldrons. 5. *Maharaurava*, the hell of great lamentations, where victims are fried and roasted over and over again. 6. *Tapana*, the hell of burning heat where the guilty are charred to cinders in a furnace. 7. *Pratapana*, the hell of extreme heat, where the victims are thrown into a lake of fire and pierced with iron spikes, and 8. *Avici*, the worst and lowest hell, the hell of 'no intermission,' guarded by four great copper dogs and eighteen infernal lictors. More original and hardly less appalling are the eight cold hells: 1. *Arbuda*, where the cold is so great that the flesh breaks out in sores. 2. *Nirarbuda*, where the whole body swells and blisters in the intense cold. 3. *Atata*, where the culprit's lips are so frozen that he can utter but this one chattering sound. 4. *Hahava* and 5. *Huhuva*, where the cold wind in the throat whistles with a noise that these syllables can only suggest. 6. *Ut-pala*, 7. *Padma*, and 8. *Pundarika*, where the sores on frozen flesh resemble respectively the buds of the blue, and red, and white lotuses.

If so many merciless details suggest that in Buddhism



there is no pity for sinners and no hope of their redemption, we must remind ourselves that even to hell the great savior Buddhas and Bodhisattvas extend their protecting care. Chief among them is the Bodhisattva who in China is known as Ti-tsang and in Japan as Jizo. Hell may be ruled by Yama, but he is not supreme. The beautiful and compassionate divinity Jizo can enter his domain to rescue those who have trusted in him and especially to protect with strong and gentle hand the little children who are lost or lonely in their own milder region of that dark abode. Out of many lovely paintings of Jizo on Japanese kake-monos one has been made memorable by the pen of Lafcadio Hearn. 'In the foreground,' he writes, 'a horrible devil with an iron club has just dashed down and scattered a pile of stones built by one of the children. The little ghost, seated by the ruin of its work, is crying, with both pretty hands to its eyes. The Devil appears to sneer. Other children also are weeping near by. But lo! Jizo comes, all light and sweetness, with a glory moving behind him like a great full moon; and he holds out his *shakujo*, his strong and holy staff, and the little ghosts catch it and cling to it, and are drawn into the circle of his protection. And other infants have caught his great sleeves, and one has been lifted to the bosom of the god.'

One result of the spread of Buddhism in China was the adoption of many of its popular features by the Chinese religion known as Taoism. Along with other beliefs, Taoism borrowed the Buddhist hell and revised it in typical Chinese fashion to conform to the neat organization of a civil state on earth. In this hybrid hell — familiar to all Chinese through little models displayed in many a city temple — there are ten courts under Yenlo-wang



(Yama) the King of Hell. Each has its ruler upon his seat of judgment, and each, like the Hindu hells, is surrounded by sixteen lesser infernos.

In the first court the ruler keeps a record of all living men, by which he can measure their careers. If, when they come to die, their virtues shall exceed their faults, they are led directly to the tenth court and there are born again into a new life on earth. Otherwise, they are set on a high tower where they may see in a huge mirror all the sins of their past. Then, with bitter memories revived, they pass on to the second court. The hells that surround it are filled with torments of excruciating thirst, of iron corselets, of cold and ice, and of whirling ashes. In the hells of the third court a man's fat is sliced from his bones, his eyes torn out, and his body sawn in two. When he moves to the fourth court he endures the agony of kneeling on bamboo spikes, and his mouth is filled with hot lime. In the fifth court his heart is torn out with an iron hook, and in the sixth he is gnawed by rats and crushed under heavy rollers. Among the sixteen hells of the seventh court are those where the victim is boiled in oil, where he is devoured by dogs, and where his mouth is stuffed with hair. By the ruler of the eighth court the wicked are condemned to be slashed to pieces or stifled in ovens or tortured by nails driven into the skull. No less horrible are the penalties of the ninth court where the tendons of the culprit are pulled out, his flesh stung by scorpions, his brain extracted and a hedgehog thrust into its place. By this time the suffering is at an end, suffering far more fiendish in its realism than the fantastic pictures of Hindu imagination, for there is hardly a penalty named that has not been known in the actual life of long-ago China. The tenth court is not a



centre for vindictive punishment. It is occupied by a sort of General Staff for managing transmigration. Its eighty-one boards or departments are well furnished with tables, chairs, and benches, to accommodate the crowd of officials who transact the business of reincarnation. Under their scrutiny must pass all souls departed, that the realm of their rebirth may be determined. After the judgment is uttered, the spirits are led to the 'Hall of Oblivion' where an old hag called Granny Meng gives them to drink a magic broth that wipes out all memory of their previous lives. The cup once drained, they are hurled into a foaming torrent of dark red waters which hurries them on to the sphere of a new existence.

Quite different from the hideous vividness of Hindu and Chinese hells is the Persian hell of Zoroastrianism. Unlike the hells of all the other great religions it has no place for fire. Fire, in Persian belief, is the divine and sacred element, not to be degraded by association with the land of the Evil One. The wicked, instead, are confronted by all that men suffer for *lack* of fire — bitter cold and foul darkness. A dreary gloom with little of pungent detail is therefore the picture familiar in the literature of Mazdaism. Hell lies deep in the middle of the earth far to the north, the region of the demons and of the chief of the demons, the Evil Spirit Ahriman. It is essentially the place of the Arch-fiend, as heaven is the place of the supreme God Ahura Mazda. Four grades are there to be found, as the soul proceeds downwards — Evil Thought Hell, Evil Word Hell, Evil Deed Hell, and the hell of endless darkness where the Evil Spirit dwells. Dense blackness there prevails. 'The darkness is fit to grasp with the hand.' And in that impenetrable gloom there is utter loneliness and silence.



'As close as the ear to the eye, and as many as the hairs on the mane of a horse, so many in number the souls of the wicked stand, but they see not, and hear no sound, one from the other; every one thinks thus, "I am alone,"' and 'the loneliness is worse than the punishment.' The darkness is pervaded by a heavy stench 'fit to cut with a knife' and by intense and biting cold. Continuous hunger and thirst afflict the condemned who are fed by the demons with putrid and polluted food like the venom of snakes and scorpions. Yet the most voracious eating never sates their gnawing appetites. And through it all the attendant devils are at hand to sting and gnaw and lacerate their victims. It is indeed 'all stench, filth, pain, punishment, and profound evil,' and 'the evil in hell is more evil than the most grievous evil on earth.'

But, as we have already observed, the Zoroastrian hell is thought to endure only until the Renovation of the World. That does not come for thousands of years, it is true; and 'when three days in hell have passed a man thinks that the nine thousand years must have passed and that the hour of release is at hand.' Yet an end will come with the general resurrection; and after three days of final agony in the body, the wicked, now purged forever, are restored to a new life upon a new earth in which righteousness alone will prevail.

Until a religion of salvation appeared in Greece with the rise of Orphism the Greeks knew nothing of a hell. In Homer and the classical mythology Hades is simply the dismal twilight abode to which all the dead descend. But one Homeric passage of later date — part of the eleventh book of the *Odyssey* — has probably felt a touch of Orphic influence, for there we find the first hints of punishment in



the world below. In Erebus, the realm of King Hades, Odysseus sees Tityus stretched on the ground. 'Two vultures sat beside him, one upon either hand, and tore his liver, piercing the caul within.' Tantalus, too, he saw 'in grievous torment and standing in a pool. It touched his chin. He strained for thirst, but could not take and drink; for as the old man bent, eager to drink, the water always was absorbed and disappeared, and at his feet the dark earth showed.... Then leafy-crowned trees dropped down their fruit — pears, pomegranates, apples with shining fruit, sweet figs, and thrifty olives. But when the old man stretched his hand to take, a breeze would toss them towards the dusky clouds.' And Sisyphus he saw 'in bitter pains, forcing a monstrous stone along with both his hands. Tugging with hand and foot, he pushed the stone upward along a hill. But when he thought to heave it on clean to the summit, a mighty power would turn it back; and so once more down to the ground the wicked stone would tumble. Again he strained to push it back; sweat ran down from his limbs, and from his head a dust cloud rose.' <sup>1</sup> Out of harmony with Homer as these famous pictures are, they are still not quite like the punishments of a true hell, for Tantalus, Tityus, and Sisyphus are no ordinary sinners paying a normal penalty for common crimes. Each is a rare exception, a peculiar case, each the special victim of divine hatred for grave offences committed against the gods themselves.

When the Orphic movement, however, had fully developed its own doctrine and literature the real meaning of hell became clear. And through that sect and the later mystery religions the notion of rewards and punishments

<sup>1</sup> G. H. Palmer's translation of the *Odyssey*.



in the after-life grew familiar to all the Greco-Roman world. The Orphics, indeed, were the first to divide the underworld into separate regions — the Elysian Fields for the blessed and Tartarus for the wicked. Their sacred books encourage the belief that all who have not received initiation will be plunged in filthy mire, there to wallow in purgatorial suffering until they are reborn to another life on earth. But as Plato tells us, rehearsing Orphic teaching, 'those who appear to be incurable by reason of the greatness of their crimes — who have committed many and terrible deeds of sacrilege, murders foul and violent or the like — such are hurled into Tartarus which is their suitable destiny, and they never come out.' It is Tartarus which he calls 'the house of vengeance and punishment' and which Lucian long after described as an immense brazier of sulphurous and pitchy flames. In more vivid detail Virgil paints the same hell as 'a prison vast with triple ramparts girt.' At the iron gate of entrance sits a Hydra 'with fifty yawning mouths immense and black.' Within there rises an iron tower whence groans may be heard and the sounds of the cruel lash and the clank of dragging chains. And below the tower opens a black pit, stretching downward into infinite darkness.

Among all the forms of punishment depicted by the Orphic devotees fire predominates. But a wide variety of other tortures was painted by their fancy. Even in the pages of philosophers who were familiar with Orphism (like Plato and Plutarch) there are lively suggestions of what an inferno means. In a story in the Republic Plato tells how Er the Pamphylian sees the cavernous mouth of hell and watches with terror when 'wild men of fiery aspect' seize and carry off the victims. These 'they bound head



and foot and hand and threw them down and flayed them with scourges, and dragged them along the road at the side, carding them on thorns like wool, and declaring to the passers-by what were their crimes, and that they were being taken away to be cast into hell.' With rather more lurid detail Plutarch, in his story of Thespesius, tells of a similar visit to Tartarus. There the traveller sees the souls of hypocrites flayed to reveal their hidden vices and beholds malicious men, who once nourished ancient grudges, twisted together in horrid embrace, gnawing and devouring each other. As he advances in his journey he comes to three lakes, one of boiling gold, one of cold lead, and one of scaly iron. Beside their banks stand ruthless demons with instruments to pull in or draw out the souls of transgressors. In the golden furnace they grow fiery and transparent; then they are plunged into the lead and hardened like hail, and finally broken and crumbled on the rough iron. When all is over, back they go to the gold again in a ceaseless round of torment.

But Plato and even thinkers of lesser rank seldom took the Orphic hell quite seriously. Only in the literature of the sect itself is infernal geography set forth in unquestioning faith and with gruesome elaboration. It was this very hell, of Greek devising, to which the early Christian Church fell heir and to which we may trace most of the material so abundant in Christian apocalypses and in the 'Visions' of the Middle Ages. There we can later study it at its worst.

The Hebrew Sheol was very like the Greek Hades, and in course of time it went through a similar evolution. Once the sad and colorless region to which all the dead must go, it suffered a change in response to a new emphasis on the after-life. As a result of the movement we have traced in



following the doctrine of the resurrection, the Jews came to believe not only in the revivification of the flesh but in rewards and punishments in the life beyond death. And to meet the demands of a developing faith the dull and neutral Sheol was transformed in the imagination of religious seers. To the men in the two centuries before Christ who wrote those strange and feverish apocalypses we must turn for the first visions of a Jewish hell.

In the oldest parts of the Book of Enoch (which date from about 170 B.C.) we find the earliest clear attempt to rearrange Sheol as a place of rewards and punishments. There we read that in Sheol there are four deep and hollow compartments. In one of these, where a bright spring of water flows, the righteous dwell until the resurrection. In a second are sinners who died without punishment in this life and now await the torments that will follow the Day of Judgment. In a third are 'set apart those who make complaint [to God], declaring how they were destroyed when they were slain in the days of the sinners.' This group is taken by some to refer to righteous martyrs and by others to a class of transgressors. In the fourth compartment are the wicked who have already paid the penalty of their misdeeds and who will not be raised at the Judgment Day but dwell in Sheol forever. Here, then, in this new version of Sheol, we have the rudimentary origins of a paradise, a purgatory, and a hell. For some it is a temporary abode, for others a final destination. But only one group of sinners is destined to ultimate damnation and the place of their future suffering is not Sheol itself. It is to be the sinister Valley of Hinnom — in Hebrew *Ge Hinnom* and in Greek *Gehenna*. Gehinnom was the name of a deep ravine on the south-west of Jerusalem, long thought to be the site, in an



earlier age, of the infamous sacrifices of children to the god Moloch and used in later times as a burning ground for offal and refuse. In apocalyptic thought, beginning with Enoch, 'the accursed valley' serves as the entrance to the pit of fiery torment into which the wicked will be cast after the Day of Judgment. To them the seer declares, 'Into darkness, fetters, and flaming fire will your spirits come, and the judgment will last for all the generations of the world. Woe to you! Ye shall find no peace.'

In another part of the Enoch literature, however — composed not long before the time of Christ — hell is curiously situated in the third heaven. 'And there are all sorts of tortures in that place. Savage darkness and impenetrable gloom; and there is no light there, but a gloomy fire is always burning, and a fiery river goes forth. And all that place has fire on all sides and on all sides cold and ice, thus it burns and freezes. And the prisoners are very savage. And the angels terrible and without pity, carrying savage weapons, and their torture was unmerciful.'<sup>1</sup>

Other apocalypses have little to add to the imagery of the Enoch literature. 'The Sibylline Oracles' tell us of Gehenna where the wicked 'shall be burned with torches the livelong day throughout the age'; the 'Psalms of Solomon' know of the place of fire and darkness where sinners abide forever; and the 'Book of Jubilees' announces 'the day of confusion and curse and of wrath and indignation' when God will burn the wicked 'in the fire that burns and destroys.'

During the first two centuries of our era apocalyptic teaching was sifted and reshaped by leaders of Jewish thought until it took the form which it has ever since held.

<sup>1</sup> R. H. Charles, *Doctrine of a Future Life in Israel, etc.*



Except for the resurrection, which was a definite dogma, there was no perfect agreement on the details of the future life; but the general outline of belief was clear enough. According to this rabbinical teaching, the souls of the wicked will abide in Gehenna for the period between death and resurrection, and to the same place of fiery torment they will be consigned forever after the resurrection and the Last Judgment. As to who will deserve the final penalty of suffering without end there was difference of opinion among the learned. The least merciful view was that all wicked Israelites and all heathen Gentiles were doomed to the inferno. A milder doctrine reserved that fate only for Jews and Gentiles who had blasphemed or forsaken God. All others would be given no more than a brief purgatorial taste of the flame. Still more humane was the belief that only oppressors and apostates among the Gentiles would be left forever in hell. Eternal pain was not to be the lot of any son of Israel.

In keeping with their usual sobriety the writings of rabbis offer vivid pictures of the tortures of Gehinnom, for their aim was to teach nothing that could not be proved from Scripture. The Bible had spoken of a pit of fire and of the darkness of Sheol; and darkness and fire were the only punishments to be sanctioned by orthodox approval. But the fire was to be fierce beyond all quenching and sixty times as hot as any fire on earth.

The Moslem inferno, too, is a place of fire, for hell-fire was one of the main *motifs* of Mohammed's early preaching. Speaking through the mouth of the Prophet, in words that have been treasured in the Koran, Allah declares, 'Verily those who disbelieve in our signs, we will broil them with fire; whenever their skins are well done, then we will



change them for other skins, that they may taste the torment.' 'Thou shalt see the sinners on that day ("the day when their faces shall writhe in the fire") bound together in fetters; with shirts of pitch and fire covering their faces.' 'Their resort is hell; whenever it grows dull we will give them another blaze!' To this ardent picture the later traditions of Islam have little to add. From a few familiar passages we learn that in hell the bodies of unbelievers will be abnormally large so that their agonies may be increased. They will be tortured by serpents as thick as the neck of a camel, bitten by scorpions as large as mules, fed with loathsome food that leaves them hungry, and given molten copper to drink when they thirst. But the fire itself is central in Moslem imagination. It is seventy times as hot as the fire of this world. When it first began it burnt for a thousand years till it became red, then burnt for another thousand years till it grew white, and finally burnt again for a thousand years till it became black, so that now the flames of hell are dark and give no light.

The Moslem hell, however, is not a hell for Moslems. As we have seen, all who confess their faith in Allah will know it as only a place of purgation from which they will soon emerge. But in its seven regions there is ample provision for all varieties of infidels. Besides the purgatorial hell for Moslems, there is a blazing fire for Christians, an intense fire for Jews, a flaming fire for the Sabæans, a scorching fire for the Magi (Persians), a huge hot fire for idolaters, and a bottomless pit for hypocrites and apostates.

Early Christianity inherited from Judaism the doctrine that the sinful soul dwells in a place of misery until the resurrection and after the resurrection is doomed to a hell of fire. That belief was all the more readily adopted be-



cause the words of Jesus himself conform in this respect to the teaching of his time. In the Gospel of Matthew, for example, there are many references to Gehenna. Jesus speaks of 'the judgment of Gehenna' and of 'Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in Gehenna.' He asserts that 'whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of the Gehenna of fire,' and warns his hearers that those who do iniquity shall be cast 'into the furnace of fire' where there shall be 'the weeping and the gnashing of teeth.' And at the close of his picture of the Last Judgment there comes the solemn declaration that those on his left hand who have not served their brethren 'shall go away into eternal punishment.' Whether we find in these sayings an accurate report of the words of our Lord we shall never know for certain. The milder character of like references in Saint Luke has tempted a few critics to doubt the authenticity of the harsher clauses in Matthew. But however that may be, these were the words recorded in the Gospel, accepted by the Church, and built firmly into the structure of Christian dogma.

Saint Paul, however, who had so much to contribute to the doctrine of the resurrection, has little or nothing to say about hell. His letters, indeed, give us very scanty material for deciding just what he believed about the ultimate fate of the wicked. He never speaks of hell as a place or gives any description of its pains. He refers to hopeless sinners as 'those that perish' and to their punishment as death, perdition, destruction, or 'eternal destruction from the face of the Lord.' How we are to interpret this thought of death or ruin is not at once clear; but there is no good reason to believe that it meant a physical extinction or literal annihilation. The contrast is not between existence



and non-existence but between the only 'life' worth having (life 'in the Spirit,' in communion with God through Christ) and that destruction which is 'destruction from the face of the Lord' — utter exclusion from God and the loss of all that He can give. This may not be 'hell' in any vulgar or picturesque sense, but hell it is in essence — damnation at its worst and damnation for eternity.

Far more explicit and concrete is the teaching of Christian theologians in the centuries that followed. As we found to be the case in the doctrines of the resurrection and the Last Judgment there is little evolution to be noted and few differences of opinion. Only in the growth of belief in purgatory, which we have already discussed, was there any important development or any marked distinction between Rome and the Eastern Church or Rome and the Protestant communions. A hell of eternal punishment for impenitent sinners has remained a standard belief through all the Christian ages.

In the second century Justin Martyr declares that 'the wicked are punished in eternal fire' and that 'hell is a place where those are to be punished who have lived wickedly.' A generation later Irenæus asserts that Christ the Judge will 'send into eternal fire those who pervert the truth and despise his Father and his coming'; but he is among the earliest of those who are not content to proclaim a penalty merely physical. To his mind it appears that 'it is in this matter just as occurs in the case of a flood of light: those who have blinded themselves, or have been blinded by others, are forever deprived of the enjoyment of light.' The real punishment is separation from God, and 'God does not punish them immediately of Himself, but that punishment falls upon them because they are destitute of all that



is good.' A century and a half later Origen of Alexandria goes much further in the attempt to give a spiritual interpretation of hell. 'Every sinner,' he tells us, 'kindles for himself the flame of his own fire, and is not plunged into some fire which has been already kindled by another.' The pains are simply the torments of conscience. And as for 'the outer darkness,' it is 'to be understood not so much of some dark atmosphere without any light as of those persons who, being plunged in the darkness of profound ignorance, have been placed beyond the reach of any light of the understanding.' But this figurative rendering of hell, congenial though it is to the modern mind, was never adopted by the Catholic Church; and Origen's claim that the suffering of sinners would last for a season only was branded as heresy. It was always permissible to teach, as did Ambrose in the West and John of Damascus in the East, that the flames of the inferno were not material flames; but they must be unending and punitive — not merely a passing purgation. No suspicion of leniency, however, attaches to the tough-minded Tertullian and Cyprian. The former assures his readers that 'the wicked will have to spend an eternity in endless fire,' and the latter writes in one of his letters that 'Gehenna ever burning will consume the accursed, and a devouring punishment of lively flames... in tortures infinite.'

Preachers have always painted hell with a freer imagination than theologians. They have commonly been less cautious in statement and more responsive to the motive of saving souls at any cost. It is not surprising, then, to find in the sermons of Chrysostom an abundance of stirring detail about the tortures of the damned. The great preacher of Antioch and Constantinople in the fourth



century was convinced (he says) that 'nothing is more profitable than the fear of hell; for the fear of it will bring us the crown of the Kingdom.... For nothing so swallows up sin and makes virtue to increase and flourish as a perpetual state of dread. Therefore it is impossible for him who does not live in fear to act aright; as, on the other hand, it is impossible that the man who lives in fear can go wrong.' Fortified by this conviction, so unflattering to the human race, Chrysostom is not backward in reminding his hearers and readers of 'the river of fire and the envenomed worm.' 'That fire,' he assures them, 'is continually burning those who have once been seized by it, and never ceases... for those also who have sinned must put on immortality, not for honor, but to have a constant supply of material for that punishment to work upon.... For if you have ever been in a bath which has been heated more than it ought to be, think then, I pray you, on the fire of hell.... For in that world many and various kinds of torment and torrents of punishment are poured in upon the soul from every side.' The torments include 'the intolerable furnaces, the rivers burning with fire, the gnashing of teeth, the chains never to be loosed, the rayless gloom, the never-ending miseries.' Believing that 'nothing is so profitable as to converse concerning hell,' he could warn his audience that 'it is better that ye be burned for a little space by our words than forever in that flame.' Yet even Chrysostom, with all his zeal for harrowing detail, is confident that 'a far more severe punishment than hell is exclusion from the glory of the other world.' His insight into the true meaning of punishment for the Christian is revealed in the words in which he comments on the famous Judgment passage in Saint Matthew's Gospel: 'Yet though one suppose ten



thousand hells, he will utter nothing like what it will be to fail of that blessed glory, to be hated of Christ, to hear "I know you not," to be accursed for not feeding him when we saw him an hungered.'

In keeping with the greatness of his intellect, Augustine has far less to say of physical agonies than of that pain which arises out of alienation from God. He agrees with the accepted belief that after the resurrection the wicked will endure eternal punishment and that suffering in hell will afflict the body as well as the soul. While the body is tormented with fire and worm the soul is tortured with fruitless repentance. 'Human bodies, animated and living, can not only survive death but also last in the torments of everlasting fires,' and 'in the world to come the pain continues that it may torment, and the nature endures that it may be sensible of it; and neither ceases to exist,' though 'even the eternal fire will be proportioned to the deserts of the wicked, so that to some it will be more, and to others less painful.' Nevertheless it is no mere fire that is to be most dreaded. The precise forms of penalty are beyond the range of human conjecture. But what we do know, as part of the Christian faith, is this — that 'to be lost out of the Kingdom of God, to be an exile from the City of God, to be alienated from the life of God, to have no share in that great goodness which God hath laid up for them that fear Him and hath wrought out for them that trust in Him, would be a punishment so great that, supposing it to be eternal, no torments that we know of, continued through as many ages as man's imagination can conceive, could be compared with it.'

A coarser and more literal conception of hell is that of Gregory the Great who wrote at the end of the sixth cen-



tury and whose authority as a theologian was unrivalled for five hundred years thereafter. He was the first to declare plainly that the utterly wicked go to hell at once after death, with no interval before the resurrection. Hell, for him, is a definite region far below the earth. Six kinds of torment are there provided, varying in degree as well as in kind. First, there is the torment of pain in an undying physical fire — which Gregory makes an article of faith. Second, the torment of separation from God. Third, the torment of fear, for pain gives no release from terror, and the damned suffer what they dread and dread what they suffer. Fourth, the torment of despair, without hope of restoration. Fifth, the torment of beholding the agony of others. And sixth (until the resurrection), the torment of witnessing the bliss of the redeemed in heaven.

More elaborate but essentially the same is the thirteenth century doctrine of Thomas Aquinas; and from his medieval standard of belief the Roman Church has never since departed. According to this Catholic orthodoxy, all those who die impenitent in mortal sin are doomed to hell at once and forever. As disembodied souls they suffer there until the resurrection. After the Judgment Day, when bodies are restored to souls, their pains are those of soul and body too, multiplied and heightened. The Church has never decided in the form of dogma as to where hell is or as to the nature of its flames; but Aquinas and most of the other leading theologians count it a definite place lit with corporeal fires. Beyond these 'pains of sense' is the 'pain of loss,' and 'the pain of loss is the very core of eternal punishment.' It means the utter separation from God and the final loss of 'the beatific vision' of His glory. The loss is final because the damned are confirmed in evil; their will



can never be good, nor can they know repentance. Hating God forever yet never hating sin, their misery is consummate, and, as Aquinas says, 'nothing that can pertain to sorrow is lacking for them.'

On the fringes of hell, yet beyond the reach of pain, are two border-lands never clearly defined in earlier days — the *Limbus Patrum* and *Limbus Infantium*. In the former dwell those heroes of the Old Testament who led worthy lives but were not redeemed by Christ to a life in heaven. In the latter are found the children who died before they were baptized. Their status had long been undecided by the Church. Many were ready to take the full consequences demanded by logic; but Augustine and others agreed that only 'the mildest condemnation of all' would be visited upon the little souls whose one sin was 'original sin.' And since the days of Aquinas the great majority of Catholic thinkers has declared that though the Limbo of Children may be on the borders of hell, no penalty is there applied save the loss of the vision of God, and even of that loss the children are not conscious. Quite unaware of what they are missing, they live in a state of 'perfect natural happiness.' To the mind untutored in technicalities the Limbo seems really a kind of heaven; it is only the logic of divinity that makes it a region of hell.

In surveying the Christian belief about hell in the early Church and in medieval times, we should reveal only half the picture if we offered no more than the doctrine of theologians. Vivid as some of their pages may be, their thought is always under a certain constraint. They are writing for the learned, and even the preachers among them are not quite ready to give free rein to the imagination. If we want to find out what the masses had in mind



when they remembered hell, we must look at literature more popular than books of doctrine and commentaries on the Bible. That more popular literature may be found in the Christian apocalypses of the second, third, and fourth centuries and in the later 'Visions' of the Middle Ages of which the *Divine Comedy* of Dante is the crown.

The Apocalypse of Peter, dating from the second century, draws most of its imagery from the Orphic hells so widely familiar in the Greco-Roman world. Though ascribed to a Christian apostle — in apocalyptic fashion — its inferno is essentially heathen. For diversity of terrors it is rivalled only by the products of the Orient. In Peter's vision of hell there are sinners devoured by flesh-eating birds, sinners hung on whirling wheels of fire, sinners hanging by their tongues over a scorching flame, sinners gnawing their lips with a hot iron set against their eyes, and sinners clad in filthy rags and rolled over and over on sharp hot gravel stones.

Of similar origin is the fourth century Apocalypse of Paul, first written in Greek but popular for a thousand years in Latin and in almost every European language. Though despised by theologians it enjoyed among the less learned an immense vogue. And for those who like something coarser than Dante it still has a fearful fascination. Its pictures reveal to us the sight of great worms three feet long with two heads, gnawing at the entrails of their victims; wheels of steel with sharp spikes; burning wheels revolving a thousand times a day and at each turn tormenting a thousand souls; a pit with terrible stench where are those who would not receive the baptism of the Church; and a deep dungeon with a scalding pool where ten thousand devils torture the men who doomed the Lord to



death. Stinging adders, red-hot razors, bloody streams, and horned fiends — these are but a few of the remaining horrors.

The medieval 'vision' literature owes much to the Apocalypse of Paul and carries on to later centuries the features of the Orphic hell. A cold hell in the north may be found in Celtic and Scandinavian folklore; but these local traditions could not prevail against the general belief, supported by popular books, which set an inferno of fire deep within the earth.

One of the earliest examples and perhaps the least affected by apocalyptic images is the Irish *Vision of Adamnan* composed in the tenth century. Its author was too artistic to revel in the cruder forms of torture, but even his delicate pen has drawn a scene where great crowds are standing in blackest mire up to their girdles, while demons throng about to beat them with fiery clubs. Others are chained to fiercely glowing columns, their faces aflame with agony. And in yet another region there is a multitude of spirits clad in burning red mantles, surrounded by a swarm of devils who throttle them, 'holding in leash the while raw-chided, stinking hounds, which they incite to devour and consume them.'

Each one of the later 'Visions' has memorable touches of its own. The *Vision of Alberic* in the twelfth century tells of a lake of mingled lead, pitch, and resin, and of the savage dog and lion breathing fire at the gates of hell to prevent escape. The *Vision of Thurcill* in the thirteenth century reports that the pit of hell has four huge caldrons. In the first souls are tormented in boiling oil and pitch, in the second in snow and ice, in the third in sulphur and fetid liquors, and in the fourth in black salt water; and every



week, in unrelieved anguish, they must move from one to the other. But the best known and most elaborate of all these pieces of infernal literature is the twelfth century *Vision of Tundale*. If we would share with readers of the Middle Ages the worst of the terrors they were taught to dread we must endure a glimpse of this appalling hell. Here we shall find devils more prominent than in other infernos. The place is alive with wicked black demons equipped with horns and pronged tails and nails as hard as steel. Their chief is Satan, a gigantic fiend with a long sharp tail who can swallow a thousand souls at once in his huge gullet or seize and crush them in his thousand hands before he drops them into the fire. Satan, of course, is of Jewish origin; but a classical touch is supplied by the presence of Vulcan who is master of the demonic smiths that hammer out the heated souls on their anvils. And Acheron, which used to be a river in the Greek Hades, appears now as a monstrous beast in whose mouth nine thousand armed men might ride. The fiends are incessantly active, each busy at his favorite form of torture. Some are stretching the culprits on sheets of iron spread over glowing coals and watching them melt like wax and trickle through the iron to resume their shapes and suffer the same anguish again and again. Others are swarming about a house built like an oven, ready to seize the bodies of gluttons and chop them into bits to be tossed into the furnace. Further torments are afforded by the mere geography of hell — by the great mountain full of smoke and fire on one side and coated with ice and snow on the other, by the deep abyss that sends out a sickening stench, and by the frozen lake in the centre of which hovers a nameless beast with dreadful black wings.



To pass from a work like the *Vision of Tundale* to the *Divina Commedia* of Dante is not merely to pass in time from the twelfth century to the early fourteenth. It is rather like passing from a set of cheap chromos to a painting by Michelangelo. The contrast is so sharp that we appreciate more keenly than ever before the supremacy of Dante's consummate art. Rephrased by another, the mere material might differ little from that of earlier visions. It is the dignity, the restraint, the caustic severity of treatment in 'the grand style' that makes his *Inferno* *the* *Inferno*. As such it is too widely known to call for any review by an inexperienced hand, nor do its features lend themselves to the mere listing that is good enough for Hindu or Orphic hells. Yet if we are not to ignore the Christian imagination at its highest confronted by the thought of hell, we must recall to memory a picture here and there of what Dante saw with Virgil as his guide.

When the poet has entered the gate over which is written 'Leave every hope, ye who enter,' he becomes aware of 'sighs, laments, and deep wailings resounding through the starless air... strange tongues, horrible utterances, words of woe, accents of anger, voices high and faint, and sounds of hands with them... making a tumult which whirls always in that air forever dark, like the sand when the whirlwind breathes.'<sup>1</sup> In that region are 'the wretched souls of those who lived without infamy and without praise.' 'These wretches, who never were alive, were naked, and much stung by gadflies and by wasps that were there; these streaked their faces with blood, which, mingled with tears, was gathered at their feet by loathsome worms.

<sup>1</sup> The passages from Dante are taken from the translation by Charles Eliot Norton.



Thence he comes to the river Acheron and Charon the ferryman — first among familiar figures of the Greek Hades, for in other quarters of the Inferno we meet with the rivers Styx and Phlegethon, with Minos the judge, and even with the great hound Cerberus. With the passage of the dark stream the two poets enter the first circle of hell — the Limbo where dwell the souls of worthy men who lived before the coming of Christ or never were converted in later days. There Dante sees Homer and Plato and Horace and Ovid and Averroes and others who are conscious of 'woe without torments' and who are only 'so far harmed that without hope they live in desire.'

In the famous second circle are the carnal sinners, their spirits whirled along by an unresting infernal hurricane which bears them up and down and hither and thither. 'No hope ever comforts them, neither of repose nor of less pain.' The gluttonous in the third circle are submerged in a dark water, beaten upon by an 'eternal, accursed, cold, and heavy rain'; and above them Cerberus barks, a cruel dog with three throats, red eyes, a greasy black beard, and claws like nails. The seventh circle contains the river of blood, 'the crimson boiling, in which the boiled were uttering loud shrieks,' and for other sinners a waste of arid and dense sand. 'Over all the sand, with a slow falling, were raining down dilated flakes of fire, as of snow on alps without a wind.' There the poet sees a flock of naked souls, weeping miserably. 'So was descending the eternal heat whereby the sand was kindled, like tinder beneath the steel, for doubling of the dole. The dance of the wretched hands was ever without repose, now here, now there, shaking off from them the fresh burning.'

As Dante and Virgil descend lower and lower into the



depths of hell, the scene grows ever more sinister and the torments more malignant. The eighth circle abounds in varied forms of anguish. The souls of corrupt officials are wallowing in boiling pitch that swells and bubbles while black-winged devils prick them with prongs to keep them under. In the midst of 'a terrible crowd of serpents... were running people naked and terrified.... They had their hands tied behind with serpents, which fixed their tail and their head through the loins and were twisted up in front.' In another quarter lies Caiaphas prone upon the ground, crucified with three stakes and writhing in agony.

In the lowest circle are the traitors, locked and buried in deep ice from which their tortured heads emerge. 'Then saw I,' says Dante, 'a thousand faces made currish by the cold: whence a shudder comes to me, and will always come, at frozen pools.' And 'I saw two frozen in one hole, so that the head of one was a hood for the other. And as bread is devoured for hunger, so the upper one set his teeth upon the other where the brain joins with the nape.' At the very bottom of hell, fixed in the eternal ice, is Lucifer; and in each of his three mouths is writhing one of the three arch-traitors of human history — Brutus, Cassius, and Judas. 'That soul up there,' says Virgil, 'which has the greatest punishment is Judas Iscariot, who has his head within and plies his legs outside. Of the other two who have their heads downwards, he who hangs from the black muzzle is Brutus... and the other is Cassius.... But the night is rising again; and now we must depart, for we have seen the whole.'

Since the medieval days of Aquinas, whose teaching is reflected in this *Inferno* of Dante, the Catholic doctrine of hell has shown no signs of development. Nor did the Prot-



estant Reformation, though it rejected purgatory, make any change in the conception of hell. The creeds and confessions of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries speak with confidence of 'endless torments' for 'ungodly men' and of 'the everlasting fire' in which they will suffer. And eternal punishment for the wicked has remained from that day to this as essential to Protestant orthodoxy as to Catholic. Indeed, hell fire has been a characteristic note of Calvinistic preaching in more than one generation. When we look for examples it is hard to avoid the Reverend Jonathan Edwards and the famous sermons of his now two hundred years old. As an extreme type he may have been worn rather threadbare by citation, but some of his pictures are too perfect of their kind to omit. On the Judgment Day, he warns us, 'the vast and innumerable throng of ungodly men shall be driven away with devils and shall with dismal cries and shrieks be cast into the great furnace of fire.... Here they must spend eternal ages in wrestling with the most excruciating torments, and in crying out in the midst of the most dreadful flames, and under the most unsupportable wrath.' These pains are not remedial or cleansing but entirely punitive, for God neither pities nor hears the damned who remain forever powerless against his anger. With the lapse of time, of course, the emphasis on penal fire has disappeared; but in the standard works of a strict Protestantism the essence of the old hell still remains — the eternity of retributive punishment, the due penalty for the infinite guilt involved in breaking the law of God. Such a hell is no reformatory, and correction is not its aim. Its occupants are doomed from the moment of death and remain forever hardened and defiant.

Only in recent times has any large number of reputable



Christian thinkers been prepared to challenge the traditional view of hell. As we found in the last chapter, the liberal theologian of our own day is inclined to substitute for hell a sort of purgatory, because the pain it involves is not necessarily endless, and instead of being vindictive it is disciplinary and remedial. An eternity of useless agony seems no longer an appropriate future even for the worst of sinners. No suffering inflicted by a God of love can be without a redeeming purpose. The utmost that can be conceded is that continued sin — persistent rebellion against God and his will — must continue to encounter that alienation from God and his creatures which is its own worst punishment. In that sense the sinner really punishes himself; his hell hereafter, no less than here, is of his own making; it is created by the pangs of hatred and fear and remorse; and it can end only when he yields to the seeking love of God.

*I want to kiss you  
if you are a girl  
I want to miss you  
if you are a boy.*



## CHAPTER XXII

### HEAVEN

THE religions of salvation that teach the future punishment of the wicked promise also a future reward for the good. With every hell there goes a corresponding heaven. In surveying the paradises of the religious world we shall therefore be concerned with the same religions which have offered such abundant material for our study of hell. But we shall be looking at the brighter side of their doctrine and viewing prospects far more cheerful. Yet it must be confessed that the panoramas of heaven, though fairer and more inviting than those of hell, appear to the average mind less variegated and less interesting. Few imaginative thinkers have ever been quite as successful in making their paradises attractive as in making their infernos abhorrent. But the study of their efforts has at least the value of contrasting what men most dread with what men most want.

In the Vedic heaven of earliest Indian belief, described in the literature of three thousand years ago, Yama, the King of the Dead, rules over all the departed who have lived worthily. His realm is in the radiant light of the outer sky where men may share with his divine associates the unbounded joys of celestial life — food and drink and the pleasures of love. Clothed in glorified bodies that magnify every delight of the senses, the spirits sit at table with the gods, enlivened by the sound of flute and song, quaffing the sacred *soma*, and relishing the milk and honey and melted butter. It is the abode 'where radiance inex-



haustible dwells... wherein is movement glad and free, in the third sky, third heaven of heavens, where are the lucid worlds of light... where loves and longings are fulfilled, the region of the ruddy sphere where food and satisfaction reign... where felicity and joy, pleasure and bliss together dwell and all desire is satisfied.'

A thousand years later, with the rise of the great epics — the Mahabharata and the Ramayana — the conception of salvation has become clear, though the nature of paradise has changed but little. Salvation, as popularly conceived, was redemption from the round of rebirth to a life of eternal bliss in heaven, to be achieved by faith in the saving power of gods like Vishnu, Krishna, and Shiva. But with that interpretation few philosophers could agree. In the eyes of the intellectual *élite* the only true and final salvation was the loss of personality in union with the divine impersonal Absolute. Heaven could be no more than a temporary state of bliss — the fruit of good karma — lasting for ages perhaps, but ending always in a new birth.

Whether for a period only or forever, the later Hindu heaven is hardly more spiritual than the Vedic. According to the epics and the sacred books of later times there are five heavens above, in ascending order — the Heaven of Indra, where souls will find dancing girls and musicians; the Heaven of Shiva, where the great god dwells with his wife and sons; the Heaven of Vishnu, built wholly of gold and adorned with pools covered with blue and red and white lotuses; the Heaven of Krishna where its ruler amuses himself (as he did in life) with the cow-herds and the lovely cow-girls; and highest of all the Heaven of Brahma, where man can 'enjoy the society of the celestial nymphs.' In all the heavens, wherever described, the joys



that await the deserving are chiefly of a bodily type. 'There is neither hunger nor thirst nor weariness nor old age nor sin.' Resplendent gods are there and palaces of gold and precious stones, restful gardens, mythical cows that give delicious milk, *kalpa*-trees bearing exquisite fruit, entrancing music with song and dance, and beautiful girls with whom to live in ease and luxury. Perhaps because the pleasures of an eternal heaven were beneath the consideration of philosophical minds, the imagery is largely of a popular and sensuous nature. Those who wanted something higher might seek it in the path of the mystic with absorption in the Absolute as a spiritual goal.

In early Buddhism and in the schools of the Hinayana which depart least widely from the founder's teaching heaven is never offered as the final goal of the believer. The true end of 'The Eightfold Path' is Nirvana — no vulgar paradise, but a state of utter peace wherein all desire has ceased and rebirth is at an end. Yet the heavens of Indian belief are not denied; they still remain as blissful abodes where those whose deeds have been good may dwell for a time awaiting a future birth in which they may renew their quest for Nirvana. In the extensive literature of these schools, preserved in the Pali tongue, there are frequent references to 'the happy realms of heaven,' to 'bliss in heaven,' and even to specific heavens like 'the Brahma world,' the famous Heaven of the Thirty-three Gods, where Sakka (Indra) rules, and the Tusita Heaven from which the Buddha descended to be reborn on earth. And what little we are told of the delights of these dwelling-places is clearly a reflection of popular Hindu fancy — gorgeous palaces, wide golden streets, perfumes and flowery garlands, and thousands of graceful nymphs.



When we turn to Mahayana Buddhism, however, we find a stronger emphasis on the life beyond death and a richer field for the imagination. Philosophers might assert that heavens were at best only transient and at worst were harmful illusions. Sound doctrine might still insist that Nirvana or union with the Eternal Buddha was the only goal worthy of a devout saint. But the mass of untrained believers and the many teachers who were ready to fit their message to the popular needs and desires dwelt upon heaven as a reward so abundant and so long-enduring that for the practical purposes of religion it was final. And however rarer souls may have deplored a coarsening of the purer doctrine, it is as a religion which can save from hell and promise heaven that the Mahayana has spread and prospered in China and Japan.

Like everything else in Buddhist teaching, heaven has been systematized to a high degree. If theologians did not succeed in abolishing it, they succeeded at least in organizing it. And in so doing they made a sharp distinction between the higher and lower satisfactions of the world above.

In the fully rounded plan familiar to many of the sects the universe is divided into three realms — the Realm of Desire, the Realm of Form, and the Realm of Formlessness. In the Realm of Desire are the material worlds and the first six heavens. The remaining heavens are included in the two higher realms. The lowest heavens, within the Realm of Desire and just above the world of men, are the six *devalokas* or abodes of the gods, where the pleasures are still those of eating, drinking, and sex. Passing from the lower to the higher, these are: 1. The Heaven of the Four Great Kings, the inhabitants of which



live in the mansions of the sun and moon. 2. The Heaven of the Thirty-three Gods (perhaps a survival of the ancient Vedic heaven), where Sakka reigns in a royal city with walls of gold and pleasure parks and a magic tree that sends out exquisite perfumes. In that celestial region one day and one night are equal to a hundred years. 3. The Yama Heaven, where eternal daylight prevails and time is marked by the opening and closing of the sacred lotuses. 4. The Tusita Heaven, where all future Buddhas are born before they appear on earth. 5. The Heaven of Transforming Pleasures, where inner desires are at once transmuted into outer satisfactions; and 6. The Heaven of the Freedom of Transformations, where gods remain unchanged while others change and where (in curious contrast to Christian doctrine) Mara the Tempter has his seat.

Above the Realm of Desire is the Realm of Form where the lusts of the flesh are left behind and bodily existence is ethereal. Here we find in ascending order the Brahma heavens (sixteen, seventeen, or eighteen in number) to be attained not by the practice of mere good works but only by meditation. So high are these above our world that if a huge stone were dropped from the lowest it would take 18,383 years to reach the earth, and so vastly has the length of life increased that in the highest the period of existence is 16,000 *kalpas* — a fairly long term considering that a *kalpa* is 4,320,000,000 years. The names of the Brahma heavens are too many to recite, but their exalted character is revealed in such titles as these: the Heaven of Lesser Light, the Heaven of Infinite Light, and the Heaven of Universal Light; the Heaven of Lesser Purity, the Heaven of Infinite Purity, and the Heaven of Uni-



versal Purity; the Cloudless Heaven, and the Passionless Heaven.

Still higher and more rarefied are the four heavens of the Realm of Formlessness where all trace of mere matter has been dispelled and where the spirit abides in a state of ecstasy. They are named the Heaven of Boundless Space, the Heaven of Infinite Consciousness, the Heaven of Non-Existence, and the Heaven of Neither Consciousness nor Unconsciousness. Beyond this realm there can be no further attainment save the perfection of Nirvana itself.

The joys of most of these Buddhist heavens are so abstract or so mystical that they do not lend themselves to popular portrayal. It is only in depicting the pleasures of the Realm of Desire that the sacred books are free to appeal to the longings of the worldly-minded. Even this freedom is rarely exercised and seldom in sensual fashion. One example may be found in a text familiar in Chinese which describes what a man will find who is reborn as a god (*deva*) in the Heaven of the Four Heavenly Kings. 'He being found seated on the knees of a *deva*, there appears to him of itself a precious vessel filled with heavenly food, partaking of which the newborn being grows in size like the rest of the *devas*. They then enter the baths to wash; after which the different kinds of perfume trees bending down will provide them with every sort of unguent for anointing their bodies. Again, there are different kinds of *kalpa* trees which produce garments from which they can select every sort of robe to wear. Again, there are trees covered with ornaments, trees for hairdressing, trees with vessels for food, fruit trees, music trees; so that each *deva*, according to his liking, may select what he pleases;



neither bound to go here nor there; provided with endless sources of joy; their places surrounded by gardens and refreshing lakes of water: thus they pass their lives.'

The Heaven of the Thirty-three is an even more stimulating theme for Buddhist imagery. Its thousand lofty gates, each guarded by five hundred blue-clad demons, surround the Golden City in the centre where the god Sakra (Sakka) dwells. On each side of his palace are a hundred towers and in every tower seventeen hundred chambers and in every chamber seven goddesses, each attended by seven handmaidens. In the city itself are streets of houses and all sorts of markets and bazaars. In the suburbs are beautiful parks — the Chariot Park, the Park for Athletics, the Promiscuous Forest Park, and the Sportive Forest Park. So far, of course, there is not a single Buddhist touch to be noted. But a soberer element has been introduced in this carefree environment, for in every park, we read, a tower is erected above some relics of the Buddha, and on the southwest side of the city there is a preaching hall where the thirty-three gods hold religious discussions and decide religious questions. Yet other accounts give the distinct impression that the thirty-three gods are much more actively interested in the still larger number of goddesses.

Independent of the traditional scheme of heavens and quite in a class by itself is the 'Western Paradise' of the Buddha Amitabha. Into that 'Pure Land' are born all those who put their trust in his saving power. Here again, for the intellectual few, the paradise may be only an illusion of mortal mind or a mere device to satisfy the untutored masses. But in the hearts of millions of believers, past and present, the Pure Land is a certain refuge and an eternal reward. Its reality is all the more



convincing because every detail of the joys to come is elaborately recited in those *sutras* which constitute the bible of the Amitabha sects. And for radiant beauty the scenes they paint have no match in Buddhist literature.

Amitabha is the Buddha of Boundless Light; and the splendor of infinite light, streaming from his glorified body, irradiates his heavenly land. It reveals innumerable forms of loveliness and sources of delight. The Western Paradise, we are told, is fragrant with sweet-smelling scents, rich in manifold flowers and fruits, haunted by flocks of singing birds, and adorned with gem-trees of gold, silver, beryl, crystal, pearl, and diamond. Huge lotus flowers are there, and deep rivers of scented water where the bather may be cool or warm as he wishes. Heavenly music fills the air, and nowhere is there a trace of sin, misfortune, or fear.

In the Pure Land believers are reborn seated cross-legged within the calyx of a lotus. For a time the soft petals shut them in, but slowly they unfold, and then hundreds of colored rays shine over them and their eyes behold 'the Buddhas and future Buddhas who fill the whole sky,' and they hear the sound of waters and the clear note of birds and the voices of many Buddhas preaching the Law. Yet there are grades of heavenly bliss, depending on the character of the soul that has been redeemed. For the lowest class of sinners it will be millions of years before the enclosing flower unfolds and as long again before they can bear the full light or hear the full message of the supreme Buddha himself. But one who has nearly achieved perfection in the life here below awakes at once to the vision of the Buddha, surrounded by his divine retinue,



with limitless rays of light streaming out from his halo to all the quarters of the universe.

Of all who attain through faith the glorious realm of Amitabha it may be said, in the words of a little Japanese book not many years old, 'There they enjoy a life everlasting and are forever free from the bondage of birth and death. There they enjoy a happiness that knows no ending. They are endowed not only with infinite wisdom and liberty but with pure love and compassion that has power to save all beings from the world of pain.'

The unimaginative sobriety of the Persian hell as compared with the Hindu is characteristic of the Persian heaven. It is not primarily a place of reward equipped with the luxuries of an Oriental paradise, but rather the domain of the supreme God of goodness Ahura Mazda, where he dwells with all those who have chosen to serve him by living a righteous life. In conformity with an essentially moral religion, this Zoroastrian heaven is devoid of sensual pleasures. The happiness it promises is the gradual approach to Ahura Mazda and the joy of abiding in his presence. As stages of progress toward the ultimate vision there are three heavenly spheres — the Paradise of Good Thoughts in the stars, the Paradise of Good Words in the moon, and the Paradise of Good Deeds in the sun. In all these regions the righteous 'are undecaying and immortal, unalarmed, undistressed, and undisturbed. And everywhere they are full of glory, fragrant, and joyful, full of delight and full of happiness.' Beyond the sun is the highest heaven — the Heaven of Endless Light — where Ahura Mazda reigns with angels and archangels. There the souls of the righteous, robed and crowned, 'offer homage to the radiance of Ahura



Mazda,' rejoicing in 'the best world of the saints, the shining and all glorious,' 'lofty, exalted, supreme, most brilliant and most pure.'

In the Greco-Roman world of antiquity so many religions and philosophies crossed and blended that we find nothing like the uniformity and simplicity that mark the thought of heaven in dogmatic faiths like Zoroastrianism or Christianity. There is a shifting confusion of ideas not easy to describe. But from the abundant variety two main types emerge. The earlier and lower of these may be traced to that Orphic movement which laid so marked a stress on the life to come. The Orphic paradise to which all believers might look forward was known as the Elysian Fields — a blissful region in the underworld, a land of flowery meadows and fruitful trees. What sort of place it was we learn from many passages in literature and from innumerable reliefs carved on the tombs of the dead. There in the peaceful sunlight the departed may rest on soft beds of grass or join in sacred song and dance. But more often they are represented in shady gardens seated at tables in the full enjoyment of feasting and drink. This banquet of the blessed was a picture so familiar that Plato reproaches the Orphics for seeking their future reward in a perpetual round of drunken carousal. And of quite the same sort was the happy underworld depicted by the mysteries of Cybele and of Isis. Indeed, so strong was the tradition that told of the joys of food and wine at some divine table that even a Christian in the fourth century — the Syrian Aphraates — could describe the felicity of the righteous in terms no less material. 'A brilliant light shines,' he says; 'trees grow of which the fruit ripens perpetually, of which the leaves never fall, and beneath these



shades, which give out a sweet fragrance, the souls eat this fruit and are never satiated.'

The heaven of Christian imagination, however, is far more indebted to the nobler type of Greco-Roman heaven — an abode of souls in the celestial bodies. Less ancient and not so deeply rooted in popular belief, this higher creed was introduced to the Greek world by philosophers. Pythagoreans were probably the first to spread the teaching, for in their doctrine the soul itself is a fiery essence, a spark of the same ether which gives light to the sky; and if at birth it descends into the body, what could be more natural than that after death it should ascend to the lofty sphere of its origin? The soul is bodily kin to the stars and needs only release from its gross covering to mount again to its true home. The same thought was later adopted by the Stoics who taught that when souls reached the upper zone they found in the ether about the moon surroundings like their own pure substance; and the Roman Seneca wrote that the soul 'tends to return to the place whence it has been sent down; there eternal quiet awaits it when it passes from the confused and gross to the clear and pure.' The Neoplatonists, too, with their mystic doctrine of the descent of the soul and its ascension to union with God, found the conception of astral immortality congenial to their metaphysics. It was at least a picturesque way of imagining the ecstasy of the soul as it rises to merge with the divine. Belief in a future life in the moon, the sun, or the stars was thus in close agreement with the philosophy of the day and so fully won the faith of thinking men that few would have denied the assertion of Cicero that 'nearly the whole heaven is filled with mankind.'



But a celestial hereafter would not have been so widely accepted among all classes as it came to be in the days of the Roman Empire if the spread of Oriental cults had not reinforced the creed of philosophers. The popular mysteries of Mithras — of Persian ancestry — taught that the souls of the just rise to the sky to live in eternal light, and the devotees of Syrian sun-gods looked to the solar radiance for the future home of the blessed dead. So persuasive was the influence of these religions, uniting with the tenets of philosophers, that the other mysteries — of Cybele, of Isis, and even of Orpheus — were won to a belief in a celestial paradise, and the Elysian Fields themselves were transferred to the moon.

Still further support for the prevailing creed was offered by the science of the time — the Ptolemaic system of astronomy. According to that scheme, accepted as confidently in the Middle Ages as in antiquity, the earth was the centre of the universe, and around and above it, set in concentric sphere after sphere, were the seven planets — the moon, Mercury, Venus, the sun, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn. Beyond these was the sphere of the fixed stars and out beyond the stars the void of ether. Such a plan of the universe made easier the thought that souls who had been purified of all earthly taint would rise aloft to one region or another, there to dwell at peace in the celestial light. On that very design of beautiful symmetry is built the heaven of Dante. Worthy of Dante, too, is that purest of all pagan descriptions of heaven given by Plotinus who taught philosophy in Rome in the third century: 'A pleasant life is theirs in heaven; they have the truth for mother, nurse, ... and nutriment; they see all things, not the things that are born and die, but



those which have real being; and they see themselves in others. For them all things are transparent, and there is nothing dark or impenetrable, but everyone is manifest to everyone internally, and all things are manifest; for light is manifest to light. For everyone has all things in himself and sees all things in another; so that all things are everywhere and all is all and each is all, and the glory is infinite.'

Unlike the heaven of Greco-Roman paganism, the Jewish heaven is purely a product of religious faith and imagination, owing no debt to any science or philosophy. Belief in a place of future reward for the righteous, unknown in the Old Testament, arose in Judaism as part of the same apocalyptic teaching to which we have traced the Hebrew version of the resurrection and of hell. And once more the famous Book of Enoch is found to be a treasury of vivid pictures and a source of the doctrine and the imagery of later times. In one of its earliest passages, to be dated before the middle of the second century before Christ, we read that Enoch was carried up into heaven and passed within the outer wall that surrounds the fore-court of the palace of God.<sup>1</sup> 'Behold in the vision clouds invited me and a mist invited me: the course of the stars and the lightnings drove and impelled me, and the winds in the vision gave me wings and drove me. And they lifted me up into heaven and I came till I drew nigh to a wall which is built of crystals and surrounded by a fiery flame... and I went into the fiery flame and drew nigh to a large house which was built of crystals: and the walls of that house were like a mosaic crystal floor, and its groundwork was of crystal. Its ceiling was like the path of the stars

<sup>1</sup> From the translation of Enoch by R. H. Charles.



and lightnings, with fiery cherubim between in a transparent heaven. A flaming fire surrounded the walls of the house and its portal blazed with fire... and as I quaked and trembled, I fell upon my face and beheld in a vision. And lo! there was a second house greater than the former, all the portals of which stood open before me, and it was built of flames of fire... I cannot describe to you its splendor and its extent. And its floor was fire, and above it were lightnings and the path of the stars, and its ceiling also was flaming fire. And I looked and saw therein a lofty throne: its appearance was as hoar-frost, its circuit was as a shining sun and the voices of cherubim. And from underneath the great throne came streams of living fire so that it was impossible to look thereon. And the Great Glory sat thereon and His raiment shone more brightly than the sun and was whiter than any snow. None of the angels could enter and behold the face of the Honored and Glorious One and no flesh could behold Him. A flaming fire was round about Him, and... ten thousand times ten thousand were before Him.'

If this may be counted the first Jewish description of Heaven, it is not the first effort to describe the vision of God — always the consummation of the Jewish and Christian paradise. The words of Enoch carry us back nearly six centuries to the vision recorded by Isaiah when he saw 'the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and his train filled the temple... and the house was filled with smoke.' It suggests, too, the vision of Ezekiel when a 'cloud filled the inner court, and the glory of the Lord mounted up... and stood over the threshold of the house; and the house was filled with the cloud, and the court was full of the brightness of the Lord's glory.'



But Enoch has more to report than his awe-compelling vision of God. In a later section of the book there is the story of another vision in which he beholds 'the mansions of the holy and the resting-places of the righteous... and their dwellings with His righteous angels.... And in that place mine eyes saw the Elect One of righteousness and of faith [the Messiah]... and all the righteous and elect before him are beautifully resplendent as lights of fire, and their mouth is full of blessing, and their lips extol the name of the Lord of Spirits.'

In that portion of the Enoch literature known as the 'Secrets of Enoch' we find one of the earliest records of the Seven Heavens so familiar in later Jewish and Christian tradition. The first heaven, where Enoch saw a great sea larger than any earthly sea, was the dwelling-place of 'the Elders.' In the second heaven the fallen angels were imprisoned. In the third he beheld the celestial paradise with its tree of life from whose roots four streams flowed with milk, honey, wine, and oil — the eternal abode prepared for the righteous. In the sixth heaven appeared the seven orders of angels and archangels who rejoice as they sing before the Lord. And in the highest heaven, surrounded by worshipping hosts of angels, the Lord is seated on his lofty throne.

In other apocalypses there is less picturesque detail but a general agreement, none the less, that some kind of paradise will be the everlasting home of the righteous, and 'in the high places of that world,' as we read in the revelation of Baruch, 'they shall dwell, and they shall be like the angels and shall be comparable with the stars.... And then shall the glory of the righteous be greater than that of the angels.'



In this apocalyptic literature and even in the orthodox writings of later Judaism it is often hard to distinguish between the happy dwelling for the just in 'the intermediate state' between death and the resurrection and that final place of reward to which the righteous will go after the resurrection and the Judgment Day. As a master of the subject has recently written, 'It is probable that these stages of the future were not so sharply distinguished in thought as we should like to have them.' Strictly speaking, it is only the ultimate reward of the good that can properly be called heaven; but since the two stages were so often confused and since our chief interest is simply to note how they were pictured, we may venture to treat all such descriptions as examples of the Jewish heaven.

The usual term for paradise in the works of the great rabbis in the second and following centuries is Gan-Eden—the Garden of Eden — a heavenly counterpart of the happy home of the earthly Adam. In one text we read of its five chambers. The first is built of cedar with a ceiling of transparent crystal, and there live the Gentiles who became devoted converts. In the second, likewise built of cedar, with a ceiling of fine silver, are found the penitents. The third mansion is very spacious, built of silver and gold, ornamented with pearls, and perfumed with spices. In its centre grows the lofty tree of life, overshadowing the patriarchs and saints — Moses, Aaron, David, and others. The martyrs inhabit the fourth chamber which is made of olive wood. The fifth is wrought of gold and silver and jewels and furnished with rich drapery and couches of precious metal. In front of it runs the river Gihon, lined with aromatic shrubs, and within it dwells the Messiah of David.



More familiar is the list of seven heavens of which a ninth century commentary gives one of the most sumptuous accounts. It tells us of the two diamond gates of paradise and the six hundred thousand angels with shining faces who greet the righteous and array them in rich garments and crown them with crowns of gold and jewels. The blessed are then led along a river valley where wonderful roses and myrtles grow and where milk and wine and balsam and honey are flowing in streams. Sixty angels guard each of the saints and bid them be seated at onyx tables studded with diamonds where they can partake of honey and of wine preserved since the days of creation. And God Himself is one of the festal company.

Such realistic descriptions, however literally they may have been taken during the Middle Ages, are a popular departure from the purer teachings of the doctors of early centuries. More in line with the best rabbinical thought is the conception of the vision of God as the highest reward in heaven, an ideal apparent in the famous statement of the Abba Areka in the third century: 'In paradise is no eating, no drinking, no cohabitation, no business, no envy, no hatred or ambition. But the righteous sit with crowned heads and enjoy the lustre of the glory of God.'

A wholly different picture is offered by Mohammed who aimed in painting hell to threaten his followers with what they most feared and in painting heaven to promise them what they most desired. The very pleasures that Areka excluded from his Jewish Gan-Eden are those on which the founder of Islam is eager to dwell. As recorded in the Koran, his references to paradise are many, and all its comforts and delights are of the sort that seventh



century Arabs might envy. The phrase most commonly found is 'gardens beneath which rivers flow,' gardens of branching trees and bubbling springs, gardens of eternal shade where neither cold nor the fierce sunlight can penetrate. In these heavenly oases the blessed enjoy an unending banquet. Adorned with pearls and silver bracelets and arrayed in green robes of silken brocade, they recline on soft couches. Attendants wait upon them bearing dishes filled with fruit and passing golden goblets of wine. The supply of food and drink is endless, for in the garden are 'rivers of water without corruption and rivers of milk, the taste whereof changes not, and rivers of wine delicious to those who drink, and rivers of honey clarified, and they shall have all kinds of fruit.' But the wine will not make them drunk since it is drained from cups 'in which is neither folly nor sin.'

As a noted Islamic scholar has pointed out, the Moslem heaven is distinctly masculine — 'an idealized reflection of the social life of Moslem men.' It therefore makes ample provision not only for feasting but for the pleasures of sex. Though allusions to the women of paradise are not numerous in the Koran, they are quite unmistakable. At the heavenly banquet the fortunate guests are waited upon by 'bright and large-eyed maids like hidden pearls,' 'maids of modest glances whom no man has deflowered before.' And these damsels are to be enjoyed by those they serve. 'We will wed them [the righteous],' says Allah Himself, 'to bright and large-eyed maids.' In brief, as the Koran sums it up, paradise is 'a blissful place — gardens and vineyards and girls with swelling breasts, and a brimming cup.'

When we pass from the Koran to later traditions the



sensual opportunities of heaven are even more clearly detailed. From one report we learn that 'he who is least among the people of paradise shall have eighty thousand slaves and seventy-two women and a tent pitched for him of pearls, rubies, and emeralds.' And another promises that the share of every true believer shall be four thousand virgins, eight thousand married women, and five hundred *houris*. Even the birth of children is possible, according to some commentators; but the whole period from conception to youth will last but one hour.

During thirteen centuries of religious life in Islam these alluring pictures of paradise have been taken literally by the masses and even by orthodox teachers. Only a few modernists, uneasy in the face of Christian criticism, have been disposed to explain them away. But if nobler thinkers have not repudiated them, they have often been ready to transcend them; for if in paradise each man will find the highest happiness he can conceive, only the vulgar will be content with feasting and unbridled license. Loftier minds and rarer souls will surely expect, and as surely find, a more spiritual reward. Even the Koran refers to the 'peace' of paradise where 'no toil shall touch them' and where 'they shall hear no folly and no sin; only the speech, Peace, Peace!' Indeed, the Koran itself comes near to finding in the vision of God the supreme joy — 'Grace from thy Lord, that is the grand bliss!' And ever since it has been an article of faith with Moslems that for those who are fitted to enjoy it the highest recompense of heaven is the beatific vision of Allah. As the great mystic al-Ghazali wrote, 'Nothing of the delights of paradise can be compared to the delight of meeting God.'

The early Christian Church inherited from Judaism not



only a belief in a happy abode for the righteous soul before the resurrection but the belief in an eternal heaven for soul and body after the resurrection. Jesus himself tells of 'treasures in heaven,' of a 'reward in heaven,' and of 'the kingdom prepared for [the righteous] from the foundation of the world.' But his few references to heaven are always in religious and not in geographical terms. Heaven is the future life with God and in God, and no scenic pictures are offered as an appeal to popular fancy. The same purely religious treatment is characteristic of the letters of Paul. The future reward of the righteous is described in the most general phrases. It is a sure reward, of supreme perfection, but not to be painted in common colors. It is 'glory and honor,' 'eternal life,' 'an incorruptible crown,' 'living with Christ,' 'the inheritance of the saints in light,' 'the hope which is laid up for you in the heavens.' In the mind of Christ and even in that of Paul the bliss to be expected was of a nature so entirely spiritual that any mere list of pleasures would have seemed the vulgar degradation of a joy beyond words — the liberty of the sons of God in the presence of their Father.

The only book in the Bible to provide us with scenes in heaven like those in Jewish apocalypses is the Book of Revelation. Its famous description of heaven as the 'New Jerusalem' has always been the model for Christians who would paint their paradise on solid canvas. That holy city 'lieth four-square,' surrounded by a high wall of jasper with three gates of pearl on each side. It is built of pure gold adorned with precious stones. Through it flows 'a river of water of life, bright as crystal,' beside which grows the tree of life, 'bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month.'



From that day to this the Christian literature about heaven has been a mixture of two elements, now with one predominant and now with another. There is the religious element, the conception of heaven in moral and spiritual terms, and the picturesque element, the vision of heaven in material form and in the language of earthly imagery. The two are often mingled; but on the whole, preachers and poets give us the latter and theologians the former.

The popular type of heaven, with its colorful details, carries on the tradition of Jewish writings and in the early centuries of our era finds expression in the apocalypses attributed to Peter and to Paul. In the former we read of 'a very great region outside this world exceeding bright with light, and the air of that place illuminated with the beams of the sun, and the earth of itself flowering with blossoms that fade not, and full of spices and plants, fair-flowering and incorruptible, and bearing blessed fruit.... And the dwellers in that place were clad with the raiment of shining angels, and their raiment was like unto their land.' More closely modelled on the New Jerusalem is the paradise revealed in the vision of Paul. There the seer finds the same city of gold with its walls and its twelve gates. Four rivers compass it about, one of honey, one of milk, one of wine, and one of oil. On its banks grow trees with ten thousand branches and ten thousand clusters of fruits, and over all shines a radiant light that makes the land seven times brighter than silver. There the blessed soul may meet not only with Christian saints but with Moses and Isaiah and Elijah and even with the not so saintly Lot and Noah. And in that heaven 'every one of the saints hath his own angel, that standeth by him and singeth hymns, and the one departeth not from the other'—



surely as severe a test of sainthood as could well be imagined.

The medieval 'vision' literature, in presenting heaven, is less facile and inventive than in depicting hell. It is indebted to classical tradition for assigning the seven heavens to the seven 'planets,' including sun and moon; but the imagery is of the Jewish type, drawn from the Book of Revelation and later apocalypses. The celestial scenes revealed are those of fruitful gardens full of trees, flowers, herbs, spices, and singing birds; walls of gold and precious stones; souls of the blessed clad in white and adorned with crowns; and choirs of angels singing harmonious praises. As a matter of fact, such is the heaven of our popular hymns to this very day. For who that has sung any hymns at all has not sung of 'My sweet home, Jerusalem'

Thy gardens and thy goodly walks  
Continually are green.  
Where grow such sweet and pleasant flowers  
As nowhere else are seen.

Right through thy streets, with silver sound,  
The living waters flow,  
And on the banks, on either side,  
The trees of life do grow.

Or perhaps more familiar are those "city towers" where

Flash the streets with jasper,  
Shine the gates with gold,  
Flows the gladdening river  
Shedding joys untold;

Or the paradise where

Golden harps are sounding,  
Angel voices sing,  
Pearly gates are opened,  
Opened for the King.



Indeed, so far as the scenery and geography of heaven are concerned, the Christian imagination, as revealed in sacred song, has been notably sterile and second-hand. One of the few seers to break away from tradition and to report visions of his own was the eighteenth century Emanuel Swedenborg. In his book called *Heaven and Hell* he describes the heavens, he tells us, 'from the testimony of my own sight and hearing, in the hope that ignorance may be lightened and incredulity dissipated.' So far from being unreal and artificial the heaven of Swedenborg is quite practical and domestic. All who attain it become angels, and the angels look and speak and dress just like human beings. They live in houses with bedchambers and parlors, surrounded by gardens and flower-beds; and the houses are arranged as in cities with streets and roads and squares. The blessed inhabitants are grouped into societies each with a definite duty — such as educating the young or caring for newly arrived spirits. But in these heavens, where the Divine Love is as the sun, 'no other government exists than that of mutual love; and the government of mutual love is heavenly government.' 'And the inmost elements of heaven are two: innocence and peace.'

If a review of the merely picturesque element in the Christian heaven reveals little of variety and less of inspiration, that is only because the greatest Christian souls have never been content simply to use colored crayons in drawing-books. Metaphor and simile they could hardly avoid; but their central thought has been of a cloudless future wherein goodness and the glory of God should be all in all. That is what heaven meant to Church Fathers like Origen, Chrysostom, and Augustine.



In keeping with his Greek inheritance Origen of Alexandria not only accepts the idea of ascending spheres through which the mounting soul may pass, but defines the essence of rewards as a growth toward perfect knowledge. 'And thus the rational nature, growing by each individual step, not as it grew in this life in flesh and body and soul, but enlarged in understanding and in power of perception, is raised as a mind already perfect to perfect knowledge, no longer at all impeded by those carnal senses, but increased in intellectual growth; and ever gazing purely and, so to speak, face to face, on the causes of things, it attains perfection.' For 'as many of us as praise Him... shall be ever engaged in the contemplation of the invisible things of God.'

Less intellectual is Chrysostom's conception of ultimate happiness, where 'all will be in a state of peace and gladness and joy, all things serene and tranquil, all will be daylight and brightness and light — not this present light, but one excelling this in splendor as much as this excels the brightness of a lamp.... But greater than all these things is the perpetual enjoyment of intercourse with Christ in the company of the angels and archangels and the higher powers.... For as concerning the King it is not even possible to say what He is like, so completely do His beauty, His grace, His splendor, His glory, His grandeur, and His magnificence elude speech and thought.'

Augustine likewise repudiates the coarser type of heaven and declares in so many words that 'we must not form notions of carnal banquets there or desire any such thing in that kingdom as to change not vices for virtues but only to make an exchange of vices.' No desire is justified but the longing for 'wisdom and life eternal'; and in the



mind of Augustine the consummation is to be found in that 'beatific vision' of God which none has ever described in prose with more beauty than he. 'And now,' he writes in his *City of God*, 'let us consider, with such ability as God may vouchsafe, how the saints shall be employed when they are clothed in immortal and spiritual bodies, and when the flesh shall live no longer in a fleshly but in a spiritual fashion. But, indeed, to tell the truth, I am at a loss to understand the nature of that employment or, shall I rather say, repose and ease, for it has never come within the range of my bodily senses.... Doubtless this passeth all understanding but His own.... God will be so known by us, and shall be so much before us, that we shall see Him by the spirit in ourselves, in one another, in Himself, in the new heavens and the new earth, in every created thing which shall then exist; and also by the body we shall see Him in every body which the keen vision of the eye of the spiritual body shall reach.'

And then, in a passage of rare eloquence, his thought rises almost as if on wings. 'How great shall be that felicity which shall be tainted with no evil, which shall lack no good, and which shall afford leisure for the praises of God!... He shall be the end of our desires who shall be seen without end, loved without cloy, and praised without weariness.... But who can conceive, not to say describe, what degrees of honor and glory shall be awarded to the various degrees of merit? Yet it cannot be doubted that there shall be degrees. And in that blessed city there shall be this great blessing, that no inferior shall envy any superior.... And thus, along with his gift, greater or less, each shall receive this further gift of contentment to desire no more than he has. Neither are we to suppose that



because sin shall have no power to delight them, free will must be withdrawn. It will, on the contrary, be all the more truly free, because set free from delight in sinning to take unfailing delight in not sinning.... In that city, then, there shall be free will, one in all the citizens, and indivisible in each, delivered from all ill, filled with all good, enjoying indefeasibly the delights of eternal joys, oblivious of sins, oblivious of sufferings, and yet not so oblivious of its deliverance as to be ungrateful to its Deliverer.... When we are restored by Him and perfected with greater grace, we shall have eternal leisure to see that He is God, for we shall be full of Him when He shall be all in all.... There shall we rest and see, see and love, love and praise. This is what shall be in the end without end.'

Catholic theologians after Augustine, such as Gregory the Great and Aquinas, did little more than systematize and define in fuller detail the nature of heavenly rewards. Gregory describes a state of perfect liberty combined with perfect security from all sin, a state in which the blessed enjoy unlimited knowledge, for knowing God they know all things and in beholding Him they are made like Him in wisdom and holiness. Among the saints there are various degrees of dignity, yet all are united in love and share each other's blessings. Among the blessings enumerated by Gregory is the privilege of witnessing the torments of the damned in their distant hell. As Aquinas put it, seven hundred years later, 'That the happiness of the saints may be more delightful to them, and that they may render more copious thanks to God for it, they are allowed to see perfectly the sufferings of the damned.... But the blessed cannot share in any unhappiness. There-



fore they do not pity the afflictions of the damned' but rather 'rejoice in the punishment of the wicked.' This exhilarating thought may be traced back as far as the Book of Enoch, which tells how the righteous delight in watching the wrath of the Lord visited on the condemned. And we may trace it as far forward as the Puritan theologians, many of whom would have agreed with Jonathan Edwards that 'the just damnation of the wicked will be an occasion of rejoicing to the saints in glory' and will 'excite in them a lively and admiring sense of the grace of God in making them so to differ.'

But it is only fair to say that little emphasis is laid upon this incidental form of enjoyment, and the theology of the Church of Rome, in keeping with the thought of Aquinas and his great predecessors, has centred its doctrine of heaven in the promise of the vision of God. Heaven, according to Catholic orthodoxy, is a definite place to which the saints at death depart at once and to which all who die in a state of grace will ultimately attain. Their happiness, great as it is already, will be further enhanced after the resurrection by the perfect union of soul with body. In heaven is no pain or sadness or possibility of sin, but endless delight in the companionship of friends long lost and the saints of all ages and the angels of God. Highest of all rewards is that beatific vision in which the just will see God clearly and distinctly. As a fourteenth-century Pope rather dryly defined it: 'The souls of all the saints in heaven have seen and do see the Divine Essence by direct intuition and face to face, in such wise that nothing created intervenes as an object of vision, but the Divine Essence presents itself to their immediate gaze, unveiled, clearly, and openly; moreover, that in this vision they



enjoy the Divine Essence, and that, in virtue of this vision and this enjoyment, they are truly blessed and possess eternal life and eternal rest.'

To this lofty conception of the nature of heaven the teaching of Protestant Christianity has added but little until modern times. Radiant happiness in the company of saints and angels and the everlasting joy of a sinless life in the immediate presence of God and his Christ — these have been the familiar themes of theologians and the cherished hopes of the faithful. Within our own times, however, there has developed a tendency in Christian writers to think of heaven not merely as a reward but as an opportunity, or rather as a reward in the form of expanded opportunity. So far as we conceive the future paradise as merely a retribution for past achievements, it is all too easy to imagine it as purely static — something offered us to enjoy. Indeed, one reason why heaven has often seemed so unattractive to the normally vigorous is that it suggested an eternal passivity or at best an activity of ecstatic contemplation congenial only to the rarer saints. But the modern interpretation of the Christian life, with its stress upon active service, and the modern habit of thinking in terms of evolution have combined to make the heaven of liberal — and even of conservative — theology more dynamic than the heaven of our forefathers. It has become, in consequence, a future state wherein moral activity and moral growth are constant and genuine, where change and variety and individuality have free scope, where progress and achievement are realities, and even where ceaseless labor in fraternal service is less a burden than a joy. And since God is creative Love, creative Love becomes central in the vision of God and of his saints.



In the best theologians of the past no one of these elements is wholly absent; yet the changing emphasis of our own day is characteristic and clear.

From its very nature, however, the thought of heaven is better expressed in poetry than in prose. Twentieth-century thinkers of various schools can do much to make the conception of future bliss more rational and plausible to men of their own time; but, though grounded in faith, that supreme ideal can be communicated only by one imagination to another. Only by aid of the symbols and metaphors of which the poet is master can the vision of paradise be expressed with lasting power to move and to uplift. That is why Christians of all ages, however formal or informal their doctrines may be, will always turn to those consummate products of the Christian imagination—the heaven of the Book of Revelation and the heaven of Dante. These poems in prose and in verse are not to be classed, at their best, among the picture-book versions of heaven in contrast to the purer thoughts of the wise. They are rather the sublimation of those thoughts in imperishable form. When we read in scholastic language about the vision of God and the glory of an unending life in a sinless realm, the intellect may agree or disagree. But the soul is not thrilled with a foretaste of that future until a poet has understood and spoken.

The vision of God in Christ and the 'cloud of witnesses' who behold it are the themes of the more exalted passages in Revelation. In the form of 'a Lamb as it had been slain' the seer has pictured the living Christ, the centre of the adoration of saints and angels. 'And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them



was ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands; saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.' Again, in a later chapter, comes a like vision. 'After this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and peoples, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. And all the angels stood round about the throne ... and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, saying Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen. And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead



them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.'

Finally, with his vision of the New Jerusalem, the writer ends his 'Revelation of Jesus Christ.' 'And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful. And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.... And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: and they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there; and they shall need no candle; neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.'

In contrast with the simplicity of the vision of heaven in the Apocalypse, Dante's *Paradiso* is complex and elaborate. Its physical setting corresponds with the Ptolemaic



astronomy accepted by the science of the day, and its theology conforms to the orthodox teaching of Saint Thomas Aquinas. But from the point of view of literature these physical and doctrinal schemes were only the raw matter from which Dante fashioned a poem of eternal beauty. And the more detailed and dogmatic the material upon which he wrought, the greater appears the miracle of an art which could so unify and exalt it.

The geographical groundwork of Dante's heaven has been compactly stated by his translator Charles Eliot Norton. 'Immediately surrounding the atmosphere of the earth was the sphere of elemental fire. Around this was the Heaven of the Moon, and encircling this, in succession, were the Heavens of Mercury, Venus, the Sun, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, the Fixed Stars, and the Crystalline or First Moving Heaven. These nine concentric heavens revolved continually around the earth, and in proportion to their distance from it was the greater swiftness of each. Encircling all was the Empyrean, increate, incorporeal, motionless, unbounded in time and space, the proper seat of God, the home of the Angels, the abode of the Elect.' These various heavens are not compartments in which the spirits who appear to Dante are confined. All of the spirits in paradise dwell in the highest heaven — the Empyrean. But for a time they can leave their seats there to welcome Dante or to reveal new truths to him.

The Christian doctrine that all beauty, truth, and goodness flow from God and that in heaven the supreme reward is the vision of God in his perfection is expressed by Dante, through all the *Paradiso*, in terms of light. The light of God's love irradiating the spirits of the redeemed is the central theme of the vision. 'Observe,' as Barrett



Wendell wrote, 'with constantly increasing wonder, how as Dante rises from sphere to sphere of Paradise each new sphere glows with a radiance infinitely surpassing the radiance of the last, itself seemingly infinite. If the *Paradiso* yielded us nothing else than this, it would be a super-human marvel.' In the sphere of the Moon, as Norton reminds us, 'the spirits are visible like fair ghosts, not wholly concealed by the radiance of their joy; in the next heaven, that of Mercury, the shining forms of the spirits are at first seen, but the one of them who speaks with Dante becomes hidden in the increasing effulgence which proceeds from the joy of love displayed in act toward the poet. In the heaven of Venus the spirits are completely swathed in light, and so from heaven to heaven their radiance becomes more and more dazzling and resplendent.'

In harmony with the deepest truth of religion, all the light comes from God and all the blessed spirits reflect in varying degree the splendor of the divine glory. The souls whom Dante meets are bathed and hidden in light; the seraphim burn with ardent love; the cherubim shine with the radiance of the knowledge of God. And the response of God's creatures to his eternal light is symbolized by eternal song, the praises of God that resound through all the heavens, the praises that caused Dante to exclaim, 'O joy! O ineffable gladness! O life entire of love and of peace! O riches secure, without longing!'

The height and consummation of heavenly bliss come with the ascent to the Empyrean 'which is pure light: light intellectual full of love, love of true good full of joy, joy which transcends every sweetness.' There the poet beholds the vast company of the redeemed and cries, 'O splendor



of God, through which I saw the high triumph of the true kingdom, give to me power to tell how I saw it!

‘Light is there above which makes the Creator visible to that creature which has its peace only in seeing Him; and it spreads in circular shape so far that its circumference would be too large a girdle for the sun. Its whole appearance is made of a ray reflected from the summit of the First Moving Heaven, which from it takes its life and potency. And as a hill mirrors itself in water at its base, as if to see itself adorned, when it is rich with verdure and with flowers, so, above the light, round and round about, on more than a thousand seats, I saw mirrored, as they rose, all that of us have made return on high. And if the lowest row gather within itself so great a light, how vast is the spread of this rose in its outermost leaves! My sight lost not itself in the breadth and in the height, but took in all the quantity and the quality of that joy.’ And that eternal rose, ‘which spreads wide, rises in tiers, and breathes forth odor of praise unto the Sun that makes perpetual spring.’

‘In form then of a pure white rose the holy host was shown to me, which, in His own blood, Christ made His bride.’ These were the saved among mankind. ‘But the other [the angelic host], which, flying, sees and sings the glory of Him who enamours it, and the goodness which made it so great, like a swarm of bees which one while enflower themselves and one while return to where their work acquires savor, were descending into the great flower which is adorned with so many leaves, and thence rising up again to where their love always abides. They had their faces all of living flame, and their wings of gold, and the rest so white that no snow reaches that limit.



When they descended into the flower, from bench to bench, they imparted of the peace and of the ardor which they acquired as they fanned their sides. Nor did the interposing of so great a flying plenitude, between what was above and the flower, impede the sight or the splendor; for the divine light penetrates through the universe, according as it is worthy, so that naught can be an obstacle to it. This secure and joyous realm, thronged with ancient and with modern folk, had its look and love all on one mark.'

That mark was the Triune God, 'the lofty Light which in Itself is true.' Well might Dante warn us: 'Thenceforward my vision was greater than our speech, which yields to such a sight, and the memory yields to such excess. As he who dreaming sees, and after the dream the passion remains imprinted, and the rest returns not to the mind, such am I; for my vision almost wholly departs, while the sweetness that was born of it yet distils within my heart.

'... I think that by the keenness of the living ray which I endured, I should have been dazed if my eyes had been averted from it; and I remember that on this account I was the more hardy to sustain it till I conjoined my gaze with the Infinite Goodness.... Thus my mind, wholly rapt, was gazing fixed, motionless, and intent, and ever with gazing grew enkindled. In that Light one becomes such that it is impossible he should ever consent to turn himself from it for other sight.... Within the profound and clear subsistence of the lofty Light appeared to me three circles of three colors and of one dimension, and one seemed reflected by the other, as Iris by Iris, and the third seemed fire which from the one and from the other is equally breathed forth....



‘O light Eternal, that sole abidest in Thyself, sole understandest Thyself, and, by Thyself understood and understanding, lovest and smilest on Thyself! That circle, which appeared in Thee generated as a reflected light, being awhile surveyed by my eyes, seemed to me depicted with our effigy within itself, of its own very color; wherefore my sight was wholly set upon it ... I wished to see how the image was conformed to the circle, and how it has its place therein; but my own wings were not for this, had it not been that my mind was smitten by a flash in which its wish came.

‘To the high fantasy here power failed; but now my desire and my will were revolved, like a wheel which is moved evenly, by the Love which moves the sun and the other stars —

*L'amor che move il sole e l'altre stelle.*







## A LIST OF BOOKS

### USED IN THE PREPARATION OF THIS WORK AND RECOMMENDED FOR FURTHER STUDY

*Note 1.* Those books referred to which deal with the various religions are in some cases not the best books on the religions in question: they are merely those from which most material can be obtained regarding the subject in hand.

*Note 2.* The only area from which rudimentary beliefs about the after-life have already been carefully collected by experts is Oceania. This accounts for the brief references under that heading and the extensive references for other regions — especially Africa.

*Note 3.* The more important references are marked with an asterisk.

### GENERAL

William R. Alger, *Critical History of the Doctrine of a Future Life*. Philadelphia, 1864.

\*Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics, edited by James Hastings. New York, 1908–1927.

\*Sir J. G. Frazer, *The Golden Bough*. 3d ed., 12 volumes, London, 1911–1915.

E. S. Hartland, *Ritual and Belief*. London, 1914.

Kaufmann Kohler, *Heaven and Hell in Comparative Religion*. New York, 1923.

\*Sir James Marchant (ed.), *Immortality*. New York, 1924.

G. F. Moore, *The Birth and Growth of Religion*. New York, 1923.

\*G. F. Moore, *History of Religions*. Rev. ed., New York, 1920.

\*G. F. Moore, *Metempsychosis*. Cambridge [U.S.], 1914.



- New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge.  
New York, 1908.
- L. B. Paton, *Spiritism and the Cult of the Dead in Antiquity*. New York, 1921.
- \**Sacred Books of the East*, edited by F. Max Müller. 50 vols., Oxford, 1879-1910.
- E. Hershey Sneath (ed.), *Religion and the Future Life*. New York, 1922.
- \*C. H. Toy, *Introduction to the History of Religions*. Boston, 1913.
- \*Edward B. Tylor, *Primitive Culture*. 3d American ed., New York, 1889.
- Edward Westermarck, *Origin and Development of the Moral Ideas*. London, 1906.

## AFRICA

- André Arcin, *La Guinée Française*. Paris, 1907.
- Paul Barret, *L'Afrique occidentale*. Paris, 1888.
- G. T. Basden, *Among the Ibos of Nigeria*. London, 1921.
- Oscar Baumann, *Usambara und seine Nachbargebiete*. Berlin, 1891.
- Oscar Baumann, *Durch Massailand zur Nilquelle*. Berlin, 1894.
- M. W. H. Beech, *The Suk*. Oxford, 1911.
- A. W. Cardinall, *The Natives of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast*. London, n.d.
- E. Casalis, *Les Bassoutos*. Paris, 1859.
- G. C. Claridge, *Wild Bush Tribes of Tropical Africa*. Philadelphia, 1922.
- F. Coillard, *Sur le Haut-Zambèze*. Paris, 1898.
- B. Cruickshank, *Eighteen Years on the Gold Coast of Africa*. London, 1853.
- M. Delafosse, *Haut-Sénégal-Niger*. Paris, 1912.
- O. Dempwolff, *Die Sandawe*. Hamburg, 1916.
- R. E. Dennett, *At the Back of the Black Man's Mind*. London, 1906.
- L. Desplagnes, *Le Plateau Central Nigérien*. Paris, 1907.
- S. S. Dornan, *Pygmies and Bushmen of the Kalahari*. London, 1925.



- J. H. Driberg, *The Lango*. London, 1923.
- A. B. Ellis, *The Ewe-Speaking Peoples of the Slave Coast*. London, 1890.
- A. B. Ellis, *The Yoruba-Speaking Peoples*. London, 1894.
- G. W. Ellis, *Negro Culture in West Africa*. New York, 1914.
- J. A. Farrer, *Zululand and the Zulus*. London, 1879.
- D. Fraser, *Winning a Primitive People*. New York, 1914.
- F. Fülleborn, *Das Deutsche Njassa-und Ruwuma-Gebiet*. Berlin, 1906.
- C. Gouldsbury and H. Sheane, *The Great Plateau of Northern Rhodesia*. London, 1911.
- Lewis Grout, *Zulu-Land*. Philadelphia [1864].
- M. W. Hilton-Simpson, *Land and Peoples of the Kasai*. London, 1911.
- S. L. Hinde, *The Last of the Masai*. London, 1901.
- C. W. Hobley, *Ethnology of A-Kamba and Other East African Tribes*. Cambridge, 1910.
- C. W. Hobley, *Bantu Beliefs and Magic*. London, 1922.
- W. C. Holden, *The Past and Future of the Kaffir Races*. London, 1866.
- G. Jaime, *De Koulikoro à Tombouctou*. Paris, 1894.
- H. H. Johnston, *The Uganda Protectorate*. London, 1902.
- H. H. Johnston, *Liberia*. London, 1906.
- Henri-A. Junod, *Les Ba-Ronga*. Neuchâtel, 1898.
- Dudley Kidd, *The Essential Kafir*. London, 1904.
- Mary H. Kingsley, *West African Studies*. London, 1899.
- M. A. Leblond, *La Grande Ile de Madagascar*. Paris, 1907.
- \*A. G. Leonard, *The Lower Niger and its Tribes*. London, 1906.
- A. LeRoy, *The Religion of the Primitives* (translated). London, 1915.
- L. Lévy-Bruhl, *La Mentalité primitive*. Paris, 1922.
- G. Lindblom, *The Akamba*. Uppsala, 1916.
- H. W. Little, *Madagascar, its History and People*. Edinburgh, 1884.
- Duff Macdonald, *Africana*. London, 1882.
- D. R. Mackenzie, *The Spirit-Ridden Konde*. Philadelphia, 1925.
- J. Mackenzie, *Day-Dawn in Dark Places*. London, 1884.
- C. W. Mackintosh, *Coillard of the Zambesi*. London, 1907.



- L. Marc, *Le Pays Mossi*. Paris, 1909.
- J. A. Massam, *The Cliff Dwellers of Kenya*. London, 1927.
- R. C. F. Maugham, *Portuguese East Africa*. London, 1906.
- \*C. K. Meek, *The Northern Tribes of Nigeria*. London, 1925.
- F. H. Melland, *In Witch-Bound Africa*. London, 1923.
- H. Meyer, *Die Barundi*. Leipzig, 1916.
- R. H. Nassau, *Fetichism in West Africa*. New York, 1904.
- C. Van Overbergh, *Les Bangala*. Bruxelles, 1907.
- C. Van Overbergh, *Les Warega*. Bruxelles, 1909.
- C. Van Overbergh, *Les Basonge*. Bruxelles, 1908.
- C. Van Overbergh, *Les Mayombe*. Bruxelles, 1907.
- S. Passarge, *Die Buschmänner der Kalahari*. Berlin, 1907.
- A. de Quatrefages, *The Pygmies* (translated). New York, 1895.
- R. S. Rattray, *Ashanti*. Oxford, 1923.
- Otto Reche, *Zur Ethnographie des abflusslosen Gebietes Deutsch-Ostafrikas*. Hamburg, 1914.
- John Roscoe, *The Northern Bantu*. Cambridge, 1915.
- John Roscoe, *The Banyankole*. Cambridge, 1923.
- John Roscoe, *The Bakitara or Banyoro*. Cambridge, 1923.
- John Roscoe, *The Baganda*. London, 1911.
- John Roscoe, *The Bagesu*. Cambridge, 1924.
- W. S. and K. Routledge, *With a Prehistoric People*. London, 1910.
- H. Rusillon, *Un culte dynastique avec évocation des morts*. Paris, 1912.
- A. Seidel, *Deutsch-Kamerun*. Berlin, 1906.
- Joseph Shooter, *The Kafirs of Natal and the Zulu Country*. London, 1857.
- J. Sibree, Jr., *The Great African Island*. London, 1880.
- E. W. Smith, *The Religion of Lower Races*. New York, 1923.
- \*E. W. Smith and A. M. Dale, *The Ila-Speaking Peoples of Northern Rhodesia*. London, 1920.
- A. J. Swann, *Fighting the Slave-Hunters in Central Africa*. London, 1910.
- P. Amaury Talbot, *In the Shadow of the Bush*. London, 1912.
- \*P. Amaury Talbot, *The Peoples of Southern Nigeria*. London, 1926.
- L. Tauxier, *Le Noir de Bondoukou*. Paris, 1921.



- L. Tauxier, *Le Noir du Yatenga*. Paris, 1917.
- G. McC. Theal, *The Yellow and Dark-Skinned People of Africa South of the Zambesi*. London, 1910.
- N. W. Thomas, *The Edo-Speaking Peoples of Nigeria*. London, 1910.
- N. W. Thomas, *The Ibo-Speaking Peoples of Nigeria*. London, 1913.
- F. and M. P. Thorbecke, *Im Hochland von Mittel-Kamerun*, Hamburg, 1919.
- E. Torday, *On the Trail of the Bushongo*. London, 1925.
- G. Volken, *Der Kilimandscharo*. Berlin, 1897.
- J. H. Weeks, *Among Congo Cannibals*. London, 1913.
- J. H. Weeks, *Among the Primitive Bakongo*. London, 1914.
- E. Werth, *Das Deutsche-Ostafrikanische Küstenlande*. Berlin, 1915.
- R. Wessmann, *The Bawenda of the Spelonken* (translated). London, 1908.
- D. Westermann, *Die Kpelle, ein Negerstamm in Liberia*. Göttingen, 1921.
- Karl Weule, *Native Life in East Africa* (translated). London, 1909.
- J. Widdicombe, *Fourteen Years in Basutoland*. London, 1891.
- \*W. C. Willoughby, *The Soul of the Bantu*. New York, 1928.
- E. Zintgraff, *Nord-Kamerun*. Berlin, 1895.

### AMERICAN TRIBES

- Hubert H. Bancroft, *The Native Races of the Pacific States*. San Francisco, 1875.
- Franz Boas, *The Central Eskimo*. Washington, 1888.
- John G. Bourke, *The Snake-Dance of the Moquis of Arizona*. New York, 1884.
- James Bryce, *South America*. New York, 1912.
- Thomas Donaldson, *Moqui Pueblo Indians of New Mexico*. Washington, 1893.
- Walter Hough, *The Hopi Indians*. Cedar Rapids, 1915.
- G. W. James, *The Indians of the Painted Desert Region*. Boston, 1904.



*The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents* (edited by R. G. Thwaites). Cleveland, 1896-1901.

*Journal of American Folk-Lore*. Boston.

Thomas A. Joyce, *South American Archæology*. New York, 1912.

John Maclean, *Canadian Savage Folk*. Toronto, 1896.

Henry Rink, *Tales and Traditions of the Eskimos*. Edinburgh, 1875.

Henry R. Schoolcraft, *Indian Tribes of the United States*. Philadelphia, 1852.

John R. Swanton, *Indian Tribes of the Lower Mississippi Valley*. Washington, 1911.

### INDIA: TRIBES AND CASTES

George W. Briggs, *The Chamars*. Calcutta, 1920.

W. Crooke, *The Popular Religion and Folk-Lore of Northern India*. Rev. ed., Westminster, 1896.

\*W. Crooke, *The Tribes and Castes of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh*. Calcutta, 1896.

John Forbes, *Eleven Years in Ceylon*. 2d ed., London, 1841  
*Gazeteer of the Bombay Presidency*. Bombay.

P. R. T. Gurdon, *The Khasis*. London, 1914.

T. C. Hodson, *The Naga Tribes of Manipur*. London, 1911.

R. H. S. Hutchinson, *An Account of the Chittagong Hill Tracts*. Calcutta, 1906.

*The Indian Antiquary*. Bombay.

*Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*. Calcutta.

*North Indian Notes and Queries*. Allahabad.

H. Parker, *Ancient Ceylon*. London, 1909.

Lewis Rice, *Mysore and Coorg*. Bangalore, 1878.

G. Richter, *Manual of Coorg*. Mangalore, 1870.

\*H. H. Risley, *The Tribes and Castes of Bengal*. Calcutta, 1892.

\*R. V. Russell, *Tribes and Castes of the Central Provinces of India*. London, 1916.

\*Edgar Thurston, *Castes and Tribes of Southern India*. Madras, 1909.

Edgar Thurston, *Ethnographic Notes of Southern India*. Madras, 1906.



Edgar Thurston, *Omens and Superstitions of Southern India*.  
London, 1912.

Edgar Thurston, *The Madras Presidency*. Cambridge, 1913.

## OCEANIA

\*Sir J. G. Frazer, *The Belief in Immortality and the Worship of the Dead*. London, 1913-1924.

Vol. I, Australia, Torres Straits Islands, New Guinea, and Melanesia.

Vol II, Polynesia.

Vol. III, Micronesia.

\*Rosalind Moss, *The Life after Death in Oceania and the Malay Archipelago*. Oxford, 1925.

## BABYLONIA

Alfred S. Geden, *Studies in the Religions of the East*. London, 1913.

\*Morris Jastrow, Jr., *Aspects of Religious Belief and Practice in Babylonia and Assyria*. New York, 1911.

Morris Jastrow, Jr., *The Religion of Babylonia and Assyria*. Boston, 1898.

Alfred Jeremias, *Handbuch der altorientalischen Geisteskultur*. Leipzig, 1913.

L. W. King, *Babylonian Religion and Mythology*. London, 1899.

T. G. Pinches, *The Religion of Babylonia and Assyria*. London, 1906.

R. C. Thompson, *Semitic Magic*. London, 1908.

## CHINA

J. T. Addison, *Chinese Ancestor Worship*. Shanghai, 1925.

\*Henri Doré, *Researches into Chinese Superstitions* (translated). Shanghai, 1914.

Herbert A. Giles, *Confucianism and its Rivals*. New York, 1915.

\*J. J. M. de Groot, *The Religious System of China*. Leyden, 1892-1910.



- W. E. Soothill, *The Three Religions of China*. London, 1913.  
 James L. Stewart, *Chinese Culture and Christianity*. New York, 1926.  
 \*Leo Wieger, *History of the Religious Beliefs in China* (translated by E. C. Werner). London, 1927.  
 Edward T. Williams, *China Yesterday and Today*. New York, 1923.

## EGYPT

- \*James H. Breasted, *Development of Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt*. New York, 1912.  
 \*E. A. Wallis Budge, *The Book of the Dead* (an English translation). London, 1901.  
 G. Steindorff, *The Religion of the Ancient Egyptians*. New York, 1905.  
 A. Wiedemann, *The Ancient Egyptian Doctrine of the Immortality of the Soul* (translated). New York, 1895.  
 A. Wiedemann, *Religion of the Ancient Egyptians*. London, 1897.

## GREECE

- Arthur Fairbanks, *A Handbook of Greek Religion*. New York, 1910.  
 \*L. R. Farnell, *The Cults of the Greek States*. Oxford, 1896-1909.  
 L. R. Farnell, *The Higher Aspects of Greek Religion*. New York, 1912.  
 R. K. Gaye, *The Platonic Conception of Immortality*. London, 1904.  
 Jane E. Harrison, *Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion*. Cambridge, 1903.  
 Jane E. Harrison, *Themis*. Cambridge, 1912.  
 Homer, *The Odyssey* (translated by George H. Palmer). Boston, n.d.  
 Walter W. Hyde, *Greek Religion and its Survivals*. Boston, 1923.  
 \*John C. Lawson, *Modern Greek Folklore and Ancient Greek Religion*. Cambridge, 1910.  
 \*Clifford H. Moore, *The Religious Thought of the Greeks*. Cambridge [U.S.], 1916.



- Gilbert Murray, *Four Stages of Greek Religion*. New York, 1912.  
 Martin P. Nilsson, *A History of Greek Religion*. Oxford, 1925.  
 \*Plato, *Dialogues* (translated by B. Jowett). 2d ed., Oxford, 1875.  
 Plutarch, *Moralia* (translation edited by W. W. Goodwin). Boston, 1870.  
 \*Erwin Rohde, *Psyche, the Cult of Souls and the Belief in Immortality Among the Greeks* (8th ed., translated). London, 1925.  
 Thaddeus Zielinski, *The Religion of Ancient Greece* (translated). London, 1926.

## ROME

- Jesse B. Carter, *The Religion of Numa*. London, 1906.  
 \*Franz Cumont, *After-Life in Roman Paganism*. New Haven, 1923.  
 \*W. Warde Fowler, *The Religious Experience of the Roman People*. London, 1911.  
 Virgil, *The Æneid* (translated by Christopher P. Cranch). Boston, 1897. [Original ed., 1872.]  
 Georg Wissowa, *Religion und Kultus der Römer*. 2d ed., Munich, 1912.

## ZOROASTRIANISM

- James H. Moulton, *Early Zoroastrianism*. London, 1913.  
 James H. Moulton, *The Treasure of the Magi*. Oxford, 1917.  
 \*J. D. C. Pavry, *The Zoroastrian Doctrine of a Future Life*. 2d ed., New York, 1929.  
 \*Nathan Söderblom, *La vie future d'après le Mazdéisme*. Paris, 1901.

## INDIAN RELIGION

- A. Barth, *The Religions of India* (translated by J. Wood). 4th ed., London, 1906.  
 Maurice Bloomfield, *The Religion of the Veda*. New York, 1908.  
 J. Estlin Carpenter, *Theism in Medieval India*. London, 1921.



- Govinda Das, *Hinduism*. Madras [1924].
- Paul Deussen, *The Philosophy of the Upanishads* (translated by A. S. Geden). Edinburgh, 1906.
- J. A. Dubois, *Hindu Manners, Customs, and Ceremonies* (translated and edited by H. K. Beauchamp). 3d ed., Oxford, 1906.
- \*J. N. Farquhar, *The Crown of Hinduism*. London, 1915.
- J. N. Farquhar, *Modern Religious Movements in India*. New York, 1915.
- H. D. Griswold, *The Religion of the Rigveda*. London, 1923.
- Henry Haigh, *Some Leading Ideas of Hinduism*. London, 1903.
- E. W. Hopkins, *Ethics of India*. New Haven, 1924.
- \*E. W. Hopkins, *The Religions of India*. Boston, 1895.
- \*Robert E. Hume (translator), *The Thirteen Principal Upanishads*. London, 1921.
- A. B. Keith, *The Religion and Philosophy of the Veda and Upanishads*. Cambridge, [U.S.], 1925.
- Melville T. Kennedy, *The Chaitanya Movement*. Calcutta, 1925.
- J. M. Macfie, *Myths and Legends of India*. Edinburgh, 1924.
- John McKenzie, *Hindu Ethics*. London, 1922.
- Nicol Macnicol, *Indian Theism*. London, 1915.
- E. O. Martin, *The Gods of India*. London, 1914.
- Sir Monier Monier-Williams, *Hinduism*. London, 1906.
- Sir Monier Monier-Williams, *Indian Wisdom*. 4th ed., London, 1893.
- Mrs. Sinclair Stevenson, *The Heart of Jainism*. London, 1915.
- Mrs. Sinclair Stevenson, *The Rites of the Twice-Born*. London, 1920.
- E. J. Thompson and A. M. Spencer, *Bengali Religious Lyrics*. Calcutta, 1923.
- M. M. Underhill, *The Hindu Religious Year*. Calcutta, 1921.

### BUDDHISM

- \*Samuel Beal, *A Catena of Buddhist Scriptures from the Chinese*. London, 1871.
- Eugene W. Burlingame, *Buddhist Legends* (translated). Cambridge [U.S.], 1921.



Ananda Coomaraswamy, *Buddha and the Gospel of Buddhism*. New York, 1916.

Lafcadio Hearn, *Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan*. Boston, 1894.  
*The Jataka, or Stories of the Buddha's Former Births* (translated by Cowell and others). 1895-1913.

\*Reginald F. Johnston, *Buddhist China*. New York, 1913.

A. B. Keith, *Buddhist Philosophy*. Oxford, 1923.

W. M. McGovern, *Manual of Buddhist Philosophy*. London, 1923.

*Principal Teachings of the True Sect of Pure Land* (Jodo Shinshu). Kyoto, 1915.

\*Karl L. Reichelt, *Truth and Tradition in Chinese Buddhism* (translated by K. V. W. Bugge). Shanghai, 1927.

\*August K. Reischauer, *Studies in Japanese Buddhism*. New York, 1917.

Timothy Richard (translator), *Guide to Buddhahood*. Shanghai, 1907.

*Sacred Books of the Buddhists*, edited by F. Max Müller, T. W. Rhys Davids, and Mrs. Rhys Davids, 5 volumes, 1899-1927.

Shinran, *Hymns of the Pure Land*. Kyoto, n.d.

## THE RELIGION OF ISRAEL AND JUDAISM

\*The Apocrypha, Authorized Version.

\*The Bible, Authorized Version and Revised Version.

C. F. Burney, *Israel's Hope of Immortality*. Oxford, 1909.

\*R. H. Charles, *Doctrine of a Future Life in Israel, in Judaism, and in Christianity*. 2d ed., London, 1913.

R. H. Charles, *Religious Development Between the Old and New Testaments*. New York, n.d.

R. T. Herford, *Judaism in the New Testament Period*. London, 1928.

\*Jewish Encyclopedia. New York, 1901-1906.

\*G. F. Moore, *Judaism*. Cambridge [U.S.], 1927.

W. O. E. Oesterley, *The Doctrine of the Last Things*. London, 1909.

John P. Peters, *The Religion of the Hebrews*. Boston, 1914.



- F. Schwally, *Das Leben nach dem Tode nach den Vorstellungen des alten Israels und des Judentums*. Giessen, 1892.  
 Henry Preserved Smith, *The Religion of Israel*. New York, 1914.

## CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE

- W. C. Allen, *A Commentary on the Gospel According to St. Matthew*. New York, 1907.  
 \* *The Ante-Nicene Fathers* (in translation, revised by A. C. Coxe). New York, 1903.  
 \* Thomas Aquinas, *The Summa Theologica* (translated by the Fathers of the English Dominican Province). London, 1911-1925.  
 \* The Bible, Authorized Version and Revised Version.  
 C. R. Bowen, *The Resurrection in the New Testament*. New York, 1911.  
 William A. Brown, *The Christian Hope*. New York, 1912.  
 John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*.  
 Louis Capéran, *Le problème du salut des infidèles*. Paris, 1912.  
 \* The Catholic Encyclopedia. New York, 1910.  
 Sydney Cave, *The Gospel of St. Paul*. London, 1928.  
 William N. Clarke, *An Outline of Christian Theology*. 20th ed., New York, 1912.  
 The Congress Books, numbers on *Purgatory, Hell, and Heaven*, published by the Society of Saints Peter and Paul, London, 19—.  
 \* John T. Darragh, *The Resurrection of the Flesh*. London, 1921.  
 F. H. Dudden, *Gregory the Great*. London, 1905.  
 Jonathan Edwards, *Works*.  
 B. S. Easton, *The Gospel According to St. Luke*. New York, 1926.  
 F. W. Farrar, *Eternal Hope*. New York, 1878.  
 Alfred E. Garvie, *Studies of Paul and his Gospel*. London, 1911.  
 Edward M. Goulburn, *The Doctrine of the Resurrection of the Body*. Oxford, 1850.  
 Francis J. Hall, *Dogmatic Theology*. Vol. X, Eschatology, New York, 1922.  
 Adolf Harnack, *History of Dogma* (translated by N. Buchanan). Boston, 1895-1899.



- Charles Hodge, *Systematic Theology*. Vol. III, Eschatology, New York, 1873.
- W. R. Inge and others, *What is Hell?* New York, 1930.
- H. Latimer Jackson, *The Eschatology of Jesus*. London, 1913.
- \*Montague R. James, *The Apocryphal New Testament*. Oxford, 1924.
- \*H. A. A. Kennedy, *St. Paul's Conceptions of the Last Things*. New York, 1904.
- H. M. Luckock, *After Death*. 5th ed., New York, 1886.
- \*H. M. Luckock, *The Intermediate State*. London, 1890.
- A. H. McNeile, *The Gospel According to St. Matthew*. London, 1915.
- H. D. A. Major, *The Resurrection of Relics*. Oxford, 1922.
- William Milligan, *The Resurrection of the Dead*. Edinburgh, 1895.
- W. Morgan, *The Religion and Theology of Paul*. Edinburgh, 1917.
- \**The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*. First and Second Series. Edited by Schaff and Wace, New York, 1887-1907.
- Alfred Plummer, *A Commentary on the Gospel According to St. Luke*. New York, 1896.
- E. H. Plumptre, *The Spirits in Prison*. Rev. ed., New York, 1891.
- Edwin J. Pratt, *Studies in Pauline Eschatology*. Toronto, 1917.
- E. B. Pusey, *What is of Faith as to Everlasting Punishment?* 3d ed., Oxford, 1880.
- Stewart D. F. Salmond, *The Christian Doctrine of Immortality*. 3d ed., Edinburgh, 1897.
- \*Philip Schaff, *The Creeds of Christendom*. 5th ed., New York, 1887.
- C. A. A. Scott, *Christianity According to St. Paul*. Cambridge, 1927.
- Reinhold Seeberg, *Textbook of the History of Doctrines*. (Rev. ed., translated by C. E. Hay.) Philadelphia, 1905.
- W. G. T. Shedd, *The Doctrine of Endless Punishment*. New York, 1886.
- George B. Stevens, *The Pauline Theology*. Rev. ed., New York, 1898.



- George B. Stevens, *The Teaching of Jesus*. New York, 1925.
- \*B. H. Streeter and others, *Immortality*. New York, 1917.
- Emanuel Swedenborg, *Heaven and its Wonders, the World of Spirits, and Hell* (translated by S. Noble). New York, 1872.
- Thomas Walker, *The Teaching of Jesus and the Jewish Teaching of His Age*. London, 1923.
- Paul Wernle, *The Beginnings of Christianity* (translated by Bienemann and Morrison). New York, 1904.
- E. W. Winstanley, *Jesus and the Future*. Edinburgh, 1913.

### FOLKLORE AND LITERATURE IN CHRISTIAN LANDS

- S. Baring-Gould, *A Book of Folk-Lore*. London [1913].
- \*Ernest J. Becker, *Medieval Visions of Heaven and Hell*. Baltimore, 1899.
- C. S. Boswell, *An Irish Precursor of Dante*. London, 1908.
- \*Anatole Le Braz, *La légende de la mort chez les Bretons Armoricaïns*. Edition définitive, Paris, 1923.
- C. S. Burne, *The Handbook of Folklore*. Rev. ed., London, 1914.
- C. S. Burne, *Shropshire Folk-Lore*. London, 1883.
- J. G. Campbell, *Superstitions of the Highlands*. Glasgow, 1900.
- J. G. Campbell, *Witchcraft and Second Sight in the Highlands*. Glasgow, 1902.
- County Folk-Lore*, volumes V and VI, London, 1908, 1912.
- \*Dante Alighieri, *The Divine Comedy* (translated by Charles Eliot Norton, Rev. ed.). Boston [1902].
- J. C. Davies, *Folk-Lore of West and Mid-Wales*. Aberystwyth, 1911.
- Folk-Lore, A Quarterly Review*. London.
- Walter Gregor, *The Folk-Lore of the North-East of Scotland*. London, 1881.
- Eleanor Hull, *Folklore of the British Isles*. London, 1928.
- International Folk-Lore Congress of the World's Columbian Exposition. Chicago, 1898.
- Vincent S. Lean, *Lean's Collectanea*. Bristol, 1903.
- E. M. Leather, *The Folk-Lore of Herefordshire*. Hereford, 1912.
- Fletcher Moss, *Folk-Lore*. Manchester, 1898.



- Howard R. Patch, *Some Elements in Mediæval Descriptions of the Other-World*. Publications Modern Language Association, Vol. XXXIII, 1918.
- C. H. Poole, *Customs, Superstitions, and Legends of the County of Somerset*. London, 1877.
- St. J. D. Seymour, *St. Patrick's Purgatory*. Dundalk, Ireland [1918].
- Montague Summers, *The Vampire*. New York, 1929.
- Marie Trevelyan, *Folk-Lore and Folk-Stories of Wales*. London, 1909.
- L. C. Wimberley, *Folklore in the English and Scottish Ballads*. Chicago, 1928.
- Dudley Wright, *Vampires and Vampirism*. London, 1914.
- Thomas Wright, *St. Patrick's Purgatory*. London, 1844.

## ISLAM

- Ameer Ali, *The Spirit of Islam*. Rev. ed., London, 1922.
- T. P. Hughes, *A Dictionary of Islam*. 2d ed., London, 1896.
- F. A. Klein, *The Religion of Islam*. London, 1906.
- H. Lammens, *Islam* (translated by Sir E. Denison Ross). London, 1929.
- George Sale, *The Koran...* (translated... [with] a Preliminary Discourse). London, 1801.
- Edward Sell, *The Faith of Islam*. 3d ed., London, 1907.

## MISCELLANEOUS

- W. G. Aston, *Shinto*. London, 1905.
- P. D. Chantepie de la Saussaye, *The Religion of the Teutons*. Boston, 1902.
- J. A. MacCulloch, *The Religion of the Ancient Celts*. Edinburgh, 1911.
- Lewis Spence, *The Gods of Mexico*. New York, 1923.







# INDEX

- Ababu, 77  
 'Abraham's bosom,' 201, 203  
 Abruzzi, 36  
 Acheron, 129, 242, 244  
 Achilles, 59  
*Acts of the Apostles*, 149  
 Æacus, 169  
 Æneas, 6  
*Æneid*, 68, 131  
 Africa, 26, 27, 39, 69, 73, 76, 83;  
     East, 10; West, 12, 45  
 Ahriman, 135, 188, 224  
 Ahts of Vancouver's Island, 87  
 Ahura Mazda, 134, 135, 188, 224,  
     256  
 Ainus, 18  
 Akamba, 56  
 al-Ghazali, 188, 266  
 Albania, 91  
 Alberuni, 34  
 Albigensian Crusade, 132  
 Alburz, Mt., 170  
 Algonquins, 7, 74  
 All Saints' Day, 37  
 All Souls' Day, 36-37  
 Allah, 146, 176, 177, 188, 231, 232,  
     265, 266  
 Ambrose, St., 163, 235  
 Amida, see *Amitabha*  
 Amitabha, the Buddha, 128, 186,  
     254, 255, 256  
 Anabaptists, 213  
 ancestor worship, 15, 23-31, 44, 45,  
     46, 61, 82, 83; cf. with tendance,  
     23; in Egypt, 23-24; in India,  
     24-26; in Oceania and Indonesia,  
     26; in Africa, 26-27; in Assyria  
     and Babylonia, 27-28; in Persia,  
     28; in Greece, 28; in Rome,  
     28-29; in China, 29-31; motives  
     of, 30-31  
*anima*, 4  
 animals, souls of, 7  
 animism, 21, 51, 103-05; see *soul*  
 Ankola, 90  
 Annam, 36, 49, 50  
 'announcements' to ancestors, 30  
*Anthesteria*, 34-35  
 Antiochus Epiphanes, 138  
 Anubis, 97  
 Apalaches, 70  
 Aphraates, 257  
*Apocalypse of Paul*, 158, 192, 240, 241,  
     268  
*Apocalypse of Peter*, 158, 191, 240, 268  
*Apocalypse of Thomas*, 158  
 apocalypses, 139, 140, 150, 158,  
     167, 170, 191, 228, 230; see  
     *Apocalyptic Movement*  
 Apocalyptic Movement, 141  
 Apocrypha, 113  
 Aquinas, St. Thomas, 161, 174, 191,  
     206, 207, 210, 238, 239, 245, 273,  
     274, 279  
 Arabs, 19  
 Aralu, 58, 85  
 Araucanians, 70, 90  
 Areka, Abba, 264  
 Aristotle, 112  
*Arya Samaj*, 126  
 Assiniboins, 88  
 Assyria, 51  
 Assyrians, 27  
*asuras*, 121  
*Atharva-Veda*, 216  
 Athena, 108  
 Athenagoras, 157, 163  
 Athenians, 28, 44  
 Athens, 34, 114  
*atman*, 4  
 Augustine, St., 132, 159, 174, 195,  
     204, 205, 237, 239, 270, 271  
 Aurignac, 17  
 Australia, 10, 65; aborigines of, 6,  
     39, 72; gulf tribes of, 89; West, 4,  
     13  
 Averroes, 244  
*Avesta*, 33, 133  
 Avilion, 68  
  
*ba*, 9  
 Ba-Ila of Rhodesia, 46, 64



- Babylonia, 18, 44, 104  
 Babylonians, 27, 58  
 Baganda, 7  
 Bahnars of Indo-China, 92, 93  
 ballads, English and Scottish, 11, 52, 61, 78  
 Banks Islanders, 96  
 Bankuma, 27  
 Bantu, 51, 55, 61, 85  
 Banyankole, 26, 76  
 Baperi, 62  
 baptism, as determining fate of soul, 194, 239  
 Baring-Gould, 19  
 Barotsi, 16, 76  
 Baruch, 262  
 Basuto, 4  
 Basutoland, 56  
 Battaks of Sumatra, 26  
 'beatific vision,' see *heaven in Christianity*  
 Belgic Confession, 162  
 Bellacoola Indians, 9, 63  
 Betsileo of Madagascar, 87  
*bhakti*, 127  
 bird, soul as, 9  
 Bodhisattvas, 210, 222  
*Bon Festival* in Japan, 35-36  
 Boniface, St., 16  
*Book of Jubilees*, 230  
*Book of the Dead*, 96-97  
 Borneo, 49, 63, 65  
 Bororos of Brazil, 9  
 Brahma, 249, 252  
 Brahmanas, 24, 183  
 Brahmanism, 126, 128, 185, 218  
 Brahmans, 25, 26, 47, 120, 125, 182, 183, 216  
 Brazil, Indians of, 6, 62  
 breath, soul as, 4  
 Bretons, 37, 49, 79  
 bridge test after death, 92-95  
 Britain, 66  
 Brittany, 13, 41, 49, 79  
 Brutus, 245  
 Brūyas, Father, 75  
 Buddha, 122, 220, 251, 255  
 Buddhas, the, 222, 255  
 Buddhism, 104, 121, 122, 126, 127, 128, 184, 185, 186, 197, 208, 210, 215, 218, 249, 251, 253, 254; Chinese, 99, 122, 186, 187, 208, 222  
 Bukowina, 54  
 Bulgarians, 36  
 Buriats, 50  
 Burma, 36, 49, 218  
 Bushmen of the Kalahari, 10  
 Busoga of Uganda, 13  
 butterfly, soul as, 9  
 Cæsar, 16  
 Caiaphas, 245  
 Calvin, 195, 211, 212, 213  
 Calvinism, 196, 197, 198  
 Cameroon, 76  
 Caribs, 70, 88  
 Cassius, 245  
 caste in India, 125, 182  
 Cathari, 132  
 Celtic folklore, 11, 65, 67, 241  
 Celtic poetry, 68  
 Celts, 16, 40, 65, 66, 68  
 Ceram, 87  
 Cerberus, 91, 244  
 Ceylon, 218  
 Chaco tribes, 70  
 Charleston, Negroes of, 19  
 Charon, 92, 244  
 chasms, as entrances to underworld, 40  
 Cheshire, 37  
 childbirth, souls of women dead in, 49, 89  
 children unbaptized, fate of, 194-95, 239  
 Chile, Indians of, 64  
 China, 12, 17, 29, 36, 41, 79, 186, 187, 218, 222, 223, 251  
 Chinese, the, 7, 11, 13, 19, 20, 22, 39, 45, 47, 50, 51, 52, 123, 208, 222  
 Chinooks of Oregon, 57  
 Chitra-Gupta, 168  
 Choctaws, 64, 93  
 Christ, see *Jesus and Christian doctrine*  
 Christian doctrine, of the resurrection, 146-67; as to standards of moral judgment, 189-99; of the intermediate state and purgatory, 202-14; of hell, 232-47; of heaven, 266-83  
 Chrysostom, 235, 270, 271  
 Church of England, 195, 197, 212, 213



- Cicero, 258  
 Cinvat Bridge, 94, 133  
*City of God*, of St. Augustine, 205, 272  
 coin, as grave-gift, 19  
 Colombia, 16  
 Confucianism, 104  
 Confucius, 17  
 Congo, 13, 16, 56, 86  
*Corinthians, First Epistle to the*, 152  
 Council of Trent, Catechism of the, 163; decrees of the, 207  
 Creed, the Apostles', 156  
 cross-roads, as burial place for suicides, 48  
 Cybele, 115, 257, 259  
 Czechs, 19
- Dakota Indians, 9  
 Danes, 47  
 Daniel, 140  
 Dante, 5, 6, 207, 216, 240, 243, 244, 245, 259, 276, 278, 279, 280, 282  
 dead, offerings to the, see *grave-offerings*, *ancestor worship*, and *tendancy*; intercourse with, 39-43; danger of the unburied, 44-45, 52, 89; see *death*  
 death, by violence, 44, 48, 52, 89; untimely, 50; the second, 77; see *dead*  
 Demeter, 114, 115  
 Democritus, 112  
 Deussen, Prof., 125  
*Dhammapada*, 184, 219  
*di manes*, 29, 60; see *manes*  
 Dido, 6  
 Diogenes, 110  
 Dionysus, 107, 108  
 distinctions in the after-life, 85-100; between nobles and commoners, 86-87; based on courage, 88; based on tests or ordeals, 88-100; based on manner of death, 89-90; see *judgment*, *standards of*  
 Dives and Lazarus, parable of, 201, 203  
*Divine Comedy*, of Dante, 240, 243  
 dog, as guardian of abode of spirits, 90-91  
 dreams, souls seen in, 5, 39, 40, 44  
 drowned, ghosts of the, 49, 90
- Durga, 124  
 Dutch Reformed Church, 162  
 Dyaks of Borneo, 26, 77, 88
- Earl Brand*, 78  
 east, the, as abode of spirits, 64  
 East Indies, 5, 26, 65  
 Eastern Church, see *Christian doctrine*  
 ecstasy, 108  
 Edwards, Jonathan, 175, 176, 246, 274  
 Egypt, 20, 61, 70, 83, 96, 104, 168  
 Egyptians, 10, 17, 23, 24, 60, 62, 65, 84, 92, 95, 98, 103  
*eidola*, 6  
 Ekoi of Nigeria, 26  
 Eleusinian Mysteries, 113-14  
 Eleusis, 114  
 Elgayo of Kenya, 74  
 Elysian Fields, 67, 68, 227, 257, 259  
 Elysium, 67, 169  
 Empedocles, 123  
 Endor, Witch of, 41-42  
*Enoch, Book of*, 141, 229, 230, 260, 261, 262, 274  
 Epicurus, 112  
 Er the Pamphylian, 131, 227  
 Erebus, 226  
*Erinyes*, 46  
*Esdras, the Second Book of*, 142  
 Eskimo, 32, 33, 55, 69, 74, 90  
 Esthonians, 36  
*etimmu*, 44  
 Etruscans, 20  
 excommunicated, the, 52  
 Ezekiel, 137, 261
- Farnell, Prof., 34  
 Feast of the Dead, see *Festivals*  
 Festivals of the Dead, 8, 32-37  
 'Fields of Earu,' 67, 83, 92  
 Fiji, 8, 16, 49, 87, 88, 89, 92  
 Finns, 58  
 Forty-two Articles, the, 213  
*Fravashis*, 28, 33  
 Frazer, Sir J. G., 36  
 funeral, as determining fate of the soul, 86  
 Futuna, 89
- Gabriel, the archangel, 177



- Gabun, 16, 40  
 Galclaresc of Indonesia, 93  
 Galicia, Spanish, 12  
*Gan-Eden*, 263, 264  
 Gazelle Peninsula, 65, 86  
 Gehenna, 171, 229, 230, 231, 233, 235  
*Ge-Hinnom*, see *Gehenna*  
 Germanic poetry, 57  
 ghosts, restless and dangerous, 44-54; see *animism, the dead, and soul*  
 Gihon, 263  
 gods, 103-05  
 Gold Coast of Africa, 16, 32, 74  
 Gotama, the Buddha, 218  
 grave, offerings at, 15-22, 90; substitutes for grave-offerings, 20; breaking of offerings at, 22  
 Greece, 11, 18, 19, 28, 40, 52, 54, 83, 91, 104, 107-16, 123, 128  
 Greek Church, see *Christian doctrine*  
 Greeks, 58, 59, 61, 62, 63, 68, 92, 128, 135, 138, 155, 164, 166, 225  
 Gregory of Nyssa, 159, 197, 204  
 Gregory the Great, Pope, 205, 237, 273  
 Guayacuras, 87  
 Guinea, 76  
  
 Hades, 4, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 85, 110, 114, 115, 129, 202, 203, 225, 226, 228, 242, 244  
 Haitians, 67  
 Hamlet, 6, 47  
 'Happy Hunting Grounds,' 70  
 Harvey Islanders, 6  
 Hearn, Lafcadio, 35, 222  
 heathen, fate of the, 195-97  
 heaven, 71, 106, 133, 134, 170, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 191, 197, 200, 201, 202, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 210, 212, 214, 218, 248; in Vedic religion, 248-49; in Hinduism, 249-50; in Buddhism, 250-56; in Zoroastrianism, 256-57; in Greco-Roman world, 257-60; in Judaism, 260-64; in Mohammedanism, 264-66; in Christianity, 266-83  
*Heaven and Hell*, by Swedenborg, 270  
 Hebrews, 11, 58, 59, 135; see *Israelites, Jews, and Judaism*  
 hell, 106, 110, 133, 134, 135, 170, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 197, 200, 201, 202, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 210, 211, 212, 214, 215; in the Vedic religion, 216; in Hinduism, 216-18; in Buddhism, 218-22; in Chinese Buddhism and Taoism, 222-24; in Zoroastrianism, 224-25; in Orphism, 225-28; in Judaism, 228-31; in Mohammedanism, 231-32; in Christianity, 232-47  
 heresy, as sin, 193-94  
 Hermes, 114  
 Herodotus, 16  
 Hesiod, 59, 91  
 Hilary of Poitiers, 159  
*Hinayana*, 218, 249  
 Hinduism, 117-28, 168, 183, 186, 197, 215, 218, 249-50  
 Hindus, 25, 39, 50, 64, 91, 96, 117-28; see *Hinduism*  
 Hinnom, Valley of, see *Gehenna*  
 Hippolytus, 174, 203  
 Homer, 7, 60, 68, 225, 226, 244  
 Hopi Indians, 56, 74  
 Horace, 244  
 horse, as grave-gift, 19  
 Horus, 99, 100  
 Hungary, 54  
 Hurons, 8, 74, 90  
  
 Iceland, 65  
 Idu, Mt., 65  
 Igorots, 13, 79  
 Ijaw of Nigeria, 92  
 image, soul as, 6  
 immortality of the soul, 106-16, 133  
 Incas, 87  
 inconsistencies in after-life beliefs, 81-84  
 incubation, 40  
 India, 24, 27, 47, 49, 51, 70, 73, 117-28, 133, 180, 216, 218  
 individualism in Jewish thought, 137  
 Indonesia, 39, 62, 77, 90  
 Indra, 128, 249  
 indulgences, in Roman Catholic doctrine, 209-10, 213  
*Inferno*, of Dante, 192, 243, 245  
 Inquisition, the, 194



- Institutes of Vishnu*, 120, 181, 216  
 intermediate state, the, in Zoroastrianism, 200; in Judaism, 200-02; in Christianity, 202-14; see *purgatory*  
 Ireland, 37  
 Irenæus, 157, 234  
 Irkalla, 58  
 Iroquois, 44, 70, 75, 90  
 Isaiah, 140, 261  
*Ishtar's Journey*, 58  
 Isis, 115, 257, 259  
 Islam, 105, 133, 177, 178, 179, 180, 197, 215, 231, 232, 265, 266; see *Mohammed*, *Mohammedans*, and *Mohammedanism*  
 islands, as abode of spirits, 65-66  
 Isle of Pines, 57  
 'Isles of the Blest,' 67  
 Israelites, 18, 135, 136; see *Hebrews*, *Jews*, and *Judaism*  
 Jainism, 126  
 Japan, 16, 35, 36, 55, 58, 104, 123, 186, 218, 222, 251  
 Japanese, the, 17, 32, 62  
 Jatakas, the, 219  
 Java, 4  
 Jehovah, 59, 135, 136, 171  
 Jerome, St., 159, 166  
 Jerusalem, 229  
 Jesus, 146, 147, 149, 150, 171, 177, 189, 192, 203, 233, 267  
 Jews, 133, 135, 136, 138, 139, 142, 144, 145, 166, 178, 229; see *Hebrews*, *Israelites*, and *Judaism*  
 Jizo, 222  
 Job, 59, 138  
 John of Damascus, 235  
 John, St., 149  
 Judaism, 104, 106, 112, 138, 144, 165, 170, 171, 200, 201, 215, 232, 260, 263, 266; see *Hebrews*, *Israelites*, and *Jews*  
 Judas Iscariot, 245  
 Judas Maccabæus, 138  
 judgment after death, moral, in Egypt, 96-99; in Hinduism, 168; in Orphism, 168, 169; in Zoroastrianism, 169, 170; in Judaism, 170, 171; in Christianity, 171-76, 178-79; in Mohammedanism, 176-77; standards of, 180-99; see *Judgment Day*  
 Judgment Day, the, 142, 143, 144, 145, 152, 155, 156, 159, 161, 162, 163, 164, 167, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 207, 214, 229, 230, 231, 233, 234, 238, 246, 263; see *judgment after death*  
 Judgment, the Last, see *Judgment Day*  
 Justin Martyr, 202, 234  
 ka, 9  
 Kai of New Guinea, 56, 89  
 Karens of Burma, 45, 56  
 karma, 117-26, 180, 211, 220, 249  
 Kayans of Borneo, 89  
 Khonds, 48, 73  
 Kilimanjaro, Mt., 27  
 Kiwai of New Guinea, 40  
 Knox, John, 162  
 Koita of New Guinea, 65  
 Konde, 56, 76  
 Koran, the, 145, 177, 189, 231, 264, 265, 266  
 Krishna, 127, 184; heaven of, 249  
 Laconia, 62  
 Laftau, Father, 75  
 Lao-Kün, 99  
 Lapland, 57  
 Lapps, 65  
 Le Braz, 13  
 Leeward Islands, 39, 87  
 Lemuria, 34  
 Letts, 36  
 Lifu, 77  
 Limbo, see *Limbus*  
*Limbus Infantium*, 239  
*Limbus Patrum*, 239, 244  
 Lincolnshire, 22  
 Lithuania, 18, 34  
*Lotus of the True Law*, 121  
 Lucian, 13, 227  
 Luther, Martin, 195, 211  
 Lutheranism, 196  
 Maccabæan Age, 138, 140; see *Judas Maccabæus*  
 Madagascar, 10  
 Mænads, 107



- magic, 24, 76, 95-99  
*Mahabharata*, 181, 249  
*Mahayana*, 121, 208, 210, 218, 220, 251; see *Buddhism*  
*Mahdi*, the, 177  
*Majjhima Nikaya*, 218  
 Malanta, 65  
 Malay Peninsula, 69  
 Malaysia, 51  
 Mandans of South Dakota, 88  
*manes*, 29, 62; see *di manes*  
 Manichæism, 132  
 Manu, Laws of, 25, 119, 126, 181, 182, 216  
 Maoris, 10, 40, 45, 69  
 Mara the Tempter, 252  
 Marquesas, 69, 87  
 Masai, 79  
 masses for the dead, 207, 208, 211  
 Matapan, Cape, 62  
 Mazdaism, see *Zoroastrianism*  
 mediums, 41  
 Melanesia, 57, 77, 79  
 Messiah, 137, 138, 139, 144, 148, 171, 177, 262, 263; see *Messianic Kingdom*  
 Messianic Kingdom, or Age, 137, 139, 141, 142, 143, 144, 170, 171  
 metempsychosis, see *transmigration*  
 meteors as spirits, 70  
 Methodist Church, the, 195  
 Methodius, Bishop of Olympus, 163  
 Mexicans, ancient, 16, 62, 65, 67, 71, 77, 95  
 Michael, the archangel, 62  
 Mictlantecutli, 95  
 migration, as determining abode of spirits, 66  
 Minos, 169, 174, 244  
 Mithras (Mithra), 115, 116, 170, 259  
 Miztecs, 32  
 Mohammed, 140, 145, 146, 164, 176, 177, 231, 264; see *Islam*, *Mohammedanism*, and *Moslems*  
 Mohammedanism, 104, 106; see *Islam*, *Mohammed*, and *Moslems*  
 Mohammedans, see *Islam*, *Mohammed*, *Mohammedanism*, and *Moslems*  
 Moloch, 230  
 moon, as abode of souls, 70  
 mortal sin, 192-93, 238  
 Moses, 135  
 Moslems, 39, 94, 145, 164, 165, 188, 189; see *Islam*, *Mohammed*, and *Mohammedanism*  
 Mossi of the Sudan, 64  
 mountains, as abode of spirits, 65  
*mundus*, 61  
 murdered, ghosts of the, 46, 90  
 mutilations, of soul, 6  
 Mycenæ, 18, 20  
 mysteries, the Greek and Roman, 104, 106, 107-16, 257, 259  
*nafs*, 4  
 Nandi, 4  
 Narada, law-book of, 181  
 nature religions, 104  
 necromancy, 40-43  
 Neoplatonism, 112, 131, 258  
 Neo-Pythagoreanism, 131  
*nephesh*, 4  
 New Caledonia, 57, 90  
 New Guinea, 13, 14, 18, 26, 46, 49, 57, 77, 93; see *Papuans*  
 New Hebrides, 89, 92  
 Nigeria, 9, 12, 16, 45, 49, 56, 73, 86  
*Nirvana*, 127, 128, 184, 249, 251, 253  
 Norse literature, 11  
 north, the, as abode of spirits, 64  
 Northern Lights, as dance of dead, 70  
 Norton, Charles Eliot, 279  
 Nuba of the Sudan, 10, 22  
 Oceania, 10, 22, 27, 62, 65, 69, 77, 83, 87; see *South Sea Islands*  
 Odysseus, 42-43, 131, 226  
*Odyssey*, 42, 67, 225  
 Ojibways, 64, 70, 92, 93, 96  
 Olivet, Mt., 174  
 Omaha Indians, 48  
 Oraons of Bengal, 13, 19  
 Orcus, 60  
 ordeals of the spirit after death, 88-100; guardian dogs, 90-91; geographical tests, 92; bridges, 92-95; crossing rivers or lakes, 92; see *judgment after death*  
 Origen, 157, 197, 235, 270, 271  
 Orpheus, 108  
 Orphism, 109-13, 129, 168-69, 215, 225, 226, 227, 228, 240, 241, 257, 259



- Osiris, 60, 71, 83; as judge, 97-99; salvation through, 97-100; mysteries of, 115  
 Ostyaks of Siberia, 9  
 Ottawa Indians, 5  
 Ovid, 7, 29, 60, 244
- Palestine, 144  
 Pampas tribes, 70  
 Papuans, 77, 93; see *New Guinea*  
 paradise, 171, 177, 229, 261; see *heaven*  
*Paradiso*, of Dante, 278  
 Parsees, 133  
 Patagonia, 18, 55  
 Paul, St., 146, 147, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 158, 173, 233, 267  
 Paumotus, 87  
 Pawnees, 19  
 Pelew Islanders, 40, 49  
 Penance, sacrament of, 206, 210  
 Persephone, 114, 115  
 Persians, the, 28, 32, 33, 34, 94, 104, 115, 133, 135, 188, 210, 224  
 personality in Indian thought, 127-28  
 Peruvians, the ancient, 16, 17, 70, 87  
 Peter, St., 149  
 Petronius, 18  
*Phædo*, 169  
*Phædrus*, 130  
 Pharisees, 144, 147  
*Philippians, Epistle to the*, 155  
 Phlegethon, 244  
 Pima Indians, 64  
 Pius X, 164  
 plants, souls of, 7  
 Plato, 110, 111, 112, 130, 131, 169, 227, 228, 244, 257  
 Pliny, 79  
 Plotinus, 131, 259  
 Plutarch, 5, 227, 228  
*pneuma*, 4  
 polytheism, 104-05  
 Pomerania, 41, 50  
 Ponka Indians, 46  
 Porphyry, 131  
 possession by spirits, 40, 51  
 Presbyterian Church, 162  
*pretas*, 121  
 Procopius, 66  
 prophets of Israel, 136
- Protestantism, see *Christian doctrine*  
*Psalms of Solomon*, 142, 230  
*psyche*, 4  
 Ptolemaic system, 259  
 Pueblo tribes, 63  
 Punans, 90  
 'Pure Land' sects and doctrines in Buddhism, 128, 186, 254, 255  
 purgatory, 36, 204-14, 229, 234, 247  
 pyramids, 10  
 Pythagoras, 123, 129  
 Pythagoreanism, 50, 129  
 Pythagoreans, 71, 79, 258
- Queensland, 64, 73  
 Quiché Indians, 4
- Rama, 127  
*Ramayana*, 249  
 Rashnu, 170  
 Re, 60, 61, 71, 83, 97  
 rebirth, see *transmigration and reincarnation*  
 redemptive religions, 103-06, 126, 215, 248  
 reflections, souls seen in, 5  
 Reformation, the, 162, 175, 211, 213, 246  
 reincarnation, in human form, 72-75, 83; see *transmigration*  
 Renovation of the World, in Zoroastrianism, 134, 170, 200, 225  
*Republic*, of Plato, 131, 227  
 resurrection of the body, 106, 133-67; in Zoroastrianism, 133-35; in Judaism, 135-45; in Mohammedanism, 145-46; in Christianity, 146-67; 201, 202, 203, 204, 212, 214, 225, 231, 238, 263, 267, 274  
 retribution by transmigration, see *transmigration*  
*Revelation, Book of*, 173, 191, 267, 269, 276, 278  
 'revenants,' 52  
 Rhadamanthus, 109, 174  
 Rhode Island, 54  
 Rhodesia, 18, 47, 56, 73, 76  
*Rig-Veda*, 216  
 Rohutu, 87  
 Roman Catholic Church, see *Christian doctrine*  
 Romans, 11, 12, 13, 18, 28, 32, 34,



- 39, 41, 50, 58, 60, 61, 68, 79,  
128  
Rome, 45, 51, 104, 128
- Sadducees, 147  
St. Augustine's Island, 86  
Sakka, 123, 250, 252, 254  
Sallust, 131  
*Samhain*, the Celtic All Saints' Day,  
37  
Samoa, 49, 65  
Samuel, 6, 42  
Sarapis, 115, 116  
Sarawak, 91  
Satan, 242  
Saul, 41-42  
Scandinavia, 19  
Scandinavian folklore, 241  
Scotland, 37, 50  
Scottish Confession of Faith, 162  
Scottish Highlanders, 39  
Scythians, 16  
Semang, 77  
Seneca, 258  
Senegal, 13  
Serbia, 18  
Set, 99  
shadow, soul as, 4, 5  
Shaoshyant, 134  
Sheol, 58, 59, 85, 136, 138, 140, 141,  
201, 228, 229, 231  
Shin Sect, in Japan, 186  
Shinto, 104  
Shiva, 249  
Shropshire, 37  
*Sibylline Oracles*, 230  
sickness caused by ghosts, 51  
Sikhism, 126  
*simulacra*, 6  
Sisyphus, 226  
*skia*, 4  
sky, souls in the, 69-71, 83  
sleep, as the intermediate state,  
212-13  
snake, as incarnation of ancestor,  
79-80  
Society Islanders, 10  
Solomon Islands, 14, 26, 65, 77, 88  
Sophocles, 115  
sorcerers, 52  
soul, nature of the, 1-9; as breath,  
4; as shadow, 4, 5; in dreams, 5,  
39-40, 44; in reflections, 5; as an  
image, 6; mutilations of, 6, 7;  
speech of, 7, 41; as material, 7;  
of animals and plants, 7, 8; multi-  
ple, 8, 9; as bird, 9; as butterfly,  
9; near grave or home or village,  
10-14, 83; shelter for, 10; fires  
for, 10; pyramids for, 10; in trees,  
13, 73; of objects, 21; in abode on  
earth, 64-68; in the sky, 69-71,  
83; transmigration of, 76-80, 106,  
110, 117-32; immortality of, 107-  
16; as immaterial essence, 111; see  
*animism, the dead, and ghosts*  
'souling,' 37  
south, the, as abode of spirits, 64  
South Sea Islands, 16, 21, 26, 65;  
see *Oceania*  
Spaniards, 36  
spirit land on earth, 64-68  
spirits, see *animism, ghosts, and soul*  
spiritualists, 41  
*spiritus*, 4  
Sraosha, 170  
stars, souls in the, 70  
Stoics, 71, 112, 258  
Styx, 92, 244  
substitutes for grave-offerings, 20  
Sudra caste, 183  
suicides, 46-48, 52, 90  
Suk of Kenya, 79  
Sumba, 32  
sun, souls in the, 69  
*Sutta Nipata*, 220  
suttee, 16  
Swedenborg, Emanuel, 270  
Syria, 115
- tablets, ancestral, 29-30, 35  
taboo, 21  
Tænarum, 62  
Takes, Cape, 66  
Tanganyika, 13  
Tanganyika, Lake, 27  
Tantalus, 226  
Taoism, 99, 186-87, 215, 222  
Tartarus, 169, 227, 228  
Tasmanians, 4  
Tatian, 156  
Temi of New Guinea, 64  
tendance of the dead, 23, 26, 83, 84;  
see *grave-offerings and ancestor worship*



- Tertullian, 40, 116, 157, 163, 164, 192, 203, 213, 235  
*Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*, 141  
 tests of the spirit after death, see *ordeals*  
 Teutonic folklore, 78, 79  
 Teutons, 39  
*The Cruel Mother*, 78  
 Theosophists, 126  
 Thespisus, 228  
 Thirty-nine Articles, the, 212  
 Thomas, St., 149  
 Thompson River Indians, 57  
 Thoth, 97  
 Thrace, 107, 108  
 Titans, 108  
 Ti-tsang, 208, 209, 222  
 Tityus, 226  
 Tlalocan, 67  
 Tlingits of Alaska, 74  
 Todas, 57, 93  
 Tonga, 16, 65  
 Tonquin, 36  
 Torres Straits Islanders, 65  
 transmigration of souls, 76, 83, 87, 106, 180; in Africa, 76-77; in Oceania and Indonesia, 77; in America, 77-78; Celtic and Germanic, 78-79; in Greece, 110; retribution by, 117-32; in India, 117-27; in Buddhism, 121-28; in Greco-Roman world, 128-31  
 Transvaal, 27  
 'Treasury of Merits,' 209  
 Tube-tube, 65  
 Tumbuka, 57  
 Tuonela, 58  
 Tylor, Edward B., 75  
 Tyrol, 36  
 Uganda, 48, 74  
*umbra*, 4  
 underworld, the, 40, 55-63, 82, 83; entrances to, 61-62  
 universalism, 197-99  
*Upanishads*, 70, 117, 118, 119, 127  
 Usambara, 39  
 Vai, of Liberia, 22  
 Valhalla, 88  
 vampires, 51-54  
*Vedanta*, 127  
 Vedantism, 126  
*Vedas*, 182, 183  
 Vedic religion, 216, 248, 249  
 Virgil, 60, 67, 91, 131, 169, 227, 243, 244, 245  
 Virginia, Indian tribes of, 70, 87  
 Vishnu, 168; heaven of, 249  
*Vishnu Purana*, 168, 181  
*Vision of Adamnan*, 91, 192, 241  
*Vision of Alberic*, 95, 192, 241  
*Vision of Thucill*, 241  
*Vision of Tundale*, 242, 243  
 visions, souls seen in, 5  
 Voigtland, 19  
 Vosges Mountains, 36  
 Vulcan, 242  
 Wang Ch'ung, 41  
 water burial, 66  
 Welsh folklore, 91  
 Wendell, Barrett, 280  
 Wends, 16  
 west, the, as abode of spirits, 64  
 'Western Paradise,' see *Pure Land*  
 Westminster Confession, 162, 212  
 Wiclif, 211  
 Winnebagoes, 70  
*Wisdom of Solomon*, 113  
 Yabim of New Guinea, 89  
 Yama, Hindu King of the Dead and of Hell, 64, 70, 91, 168, 217, 219, 222, 248  
 Yen-wang (or Yenlo-wang=Yama), 99, 222  
 Yoruba, 73, 90  
 Zeus, 108, 114  
 Zoroaster, 133, 134  
 Zoroastrianism, 94, 104, 133, 169, 180, 187, 197, 210, 215, 224, 256  
 Zulus, 16, 39, 62, 76, 79  
 Zwingli, 195



